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THE BOOKMAN

THE SHINING HOUR

BY WILLIAM McFEE

THE destroyer, driven by her three powerful turbines, moves forward in a series of long vibrant lunges. As she careens in each of her rhythmical pauses, there mingles with the interminable hum of her revolving rotors the complaining sough and hiss of the white spume flying from her high-flaring forecastle, and overflowing with a dazzling commotion the opaque blue of the heaving sea. Far forward, in the shadows beneath that same forecastle, screened from light and weather, and the flat white tops of their saucy caps catching the pale glow of a dirty electric globe, sit several bluejackets, the blue-grey smoke of their cigarettes vanishing like strips of impalpable gauze overside. On the bridge a solitary gleaming figure in oilskins and peaked hat maintains itself in equilibrium with the intelligent precision of a motionless pendulum. Nearer, the torpedoes in the sinister hooded tubes strain slightly at their lashings between the huge squat cowls, with their wired orifices, which lead to the forced-draft fans of the bright, clean, silent stokeholds. The three short and flattened funnels are raked, so that, viewed from astern they have an air of haughty and indomitable endurance, like that of a man driving a team at furious speed and leaning back in derision. And from their throats pour torrents of hot gases visible only by the tremulous agitation of the atmosphere to leeward. At intervals, as the slim ovalled stern rises higher than usual, the sunlight glints on the bronze hand-wheels of the after gun and gives a delicate sheen to the green-painted depth-charges in their cradles by the rail. And there is an ominous roar from the white effervescence below, a roar which dies away immediately the stern subsides, and one can see again the emerald and jade and cream of the wake stretching like a floating ribbon to the limits of vision.

And as we proceed, to use a naval euphemism for any adjustment of position, whether carried out at one knot or one hundred, the scene through which we are passing changes with

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that fabulous disregard of rational probabilities which is experienced in dreams. The islands of the Ægean seem to be playing, as in mythological times, some ponderous and mysterious game. They come and go. They execute protean transformations of outline and chameleon changes of lustre and hue. As we speed westward the sun behind Olympos seems, like King Charles, an unconscionable time dying: and then, as the course is changed to the northeastward he drops with disconcerting suddenness and a polychromatic splash into a transfigured ocean. And a staid and respectable cargo-boat, doing her twelve knots perhaps, heaves into clear view, slides past, and vanishes with the indecent haste of a funeral reproduced on the cinematograph.

Such is life at thirty-five knots.

On such an occasion, too, as has been described, a benevolent and keen-eyed aviator, had he been passing overhead, might have seen, huddled upon the after deck of the destroyer, a figure in naval uniform with his oilskins up to his ears, keeping a watchful eye upon a khaki-colored sea-bag and a couple of battered suitcases which threatened at every swing to come adrift and slide over the smooth linoleum-covered deck into the sea. And being familiar with that part of the world and the naval habits pertaining thereto, this aviator would have surmised that the figure would be, very likely, a Lieutenant of Reserve on his way home, who had been granted a passage on a destroyer to enable him to join another warship which would consent to take him to Malta.

And his surmise would have been perfectly correct.

But what this benevolent aviator would not have divined as he swept over and on, and ultimately picked up his next landmark, which was Mount Athos, would be that the Lieutenant of Reserve had made a vow to write an article before he got home, and that he was feeling depressed at the extreme unlikelihood of his ever doing so if his transit was to be conducted seated on a bronze scuttle and holding on to his worldly possessions as they slipped and swayed.

Another thing the aviator would never have guessed was that this Lieutenant of Reserve, addicted as he was to literature, had never been able to take it seriously. It was almost as if he and literature had had a most fascinating intrigue for a good many years yet he had always refused to marry her! He had never been able to settle down day after day to a humdrum ding-dong battle with a manuscript, every week seeing another batch finished and off to the printers: a steady, working journeyman of letters. He had heard of such people. He had read interviews with eminent votaries of this sort of thing and had taken their statements (uttered without the flicker of an eyelash) with a grain of salt. He had always been ready with a perfectly valid reason which excused his own failure to do such things. He was a Lieutenant of Reserve and it was impossible, with the daily duties and grave responsibilities of such a position, to concentrate upon anything else.

All nonsense, of course, as anyone who has seen a Lieutenant of Reserve at work could tell you. Besides, it is well known that men at the front wrote poems "under fire", that army officers sat amid shot and shell and calmly dictated best sellers. It is equally well known that, with practice, any naval officer of average intelligence can be educated to fire a fifteen-inch gun with one hand and write a

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villanelle with the other. As for aviators, they may be said not only to "lisp in numbers" as was said of Pope, but they take as many flights of fancy as they do over the lines. So there is no real reason for a mere Lieutenant of Reserve failing to turn out a monotonously regular ten thousand words a day, let us say, except his own laziness and incapacity. And this particular Lieutenant of Reserve felt this in his heart; and so, as soon as the cares of office fell from his shoulders he vowed a vow that each day he would do a regular whack at this proposed article, that each day he would improve the shining hour.

Moreover, and above all, there was the great example of Anthony Trollope. Possibly the reader has heard of that eminent best seller of a past age, whom nothing could dismay. For Trollope's chief claim to the pop-eyed reverence of posterity seems to be that he reduced writing to the methodical precision of a carpenter planing a board. His slogan was not "art for art's sake", or "quality not quantity", or anything like that at all. It was not even that ancient piece of twaddle *"nulla dies sine linea"*. It was "a page every quarter of an hour". For years the Lieutenant of Reserve had been haunted by the picture evoked by that simple phrase—the picture of a big beefy person with mutton-chop whiskers and a quill-pen, sitting squarely at a table with a clock before him; and four times every hour would be heard the hiss of a sheet torn off and flung aside and a fresh one begun. It is no good arguing that they didn't use writing blocks in those days. A man who worked his brain by the clock would no doubt invent a tear-off pad for his own use. I have seen him, in nightmares, and heard the hiss. And nothing could stop him. At sea he was just the same. The ship might roll, the waves run mountains high, sailors get themselves washed off and drowned, engines break down, boiler-furnaces collapse and propeller-shafts carry away—*n'importe*. Wedged into his seat in the cabin Trollope drove steadily on. Every fifteen minutes, *click!* another page finished. If a chapter happened to be completed, half-way down a page, he did not stop. On! on! not even when a novel was finished did he waste any time. He took a fresh sheet of paper perhaps (with a steady glance at the clock) and went right on at the next one.

There was something heroic about this, one feels, but there is an uneasy feeling at the back of one's mind that the man had mistaken his vocation. Why did he do it? Had he a frightful vision of a public at its last gasp for lack of nourishing fiction, and so toiled on with undiminished ardor, hour after hour, day after day? Had he committed some dark and desperate crime, and so was seeking to do penance by thus immolating himself upon the altar of unremitting labor? Otherwise, why did he do it? For the theory that he liked doing it or that it was a perfectly natural thing for an author to do, is untenable. There is a story that he did not believe very much in inspiration, or rather that he did not believe in waiting for it; and one is bound to admit that his novels seem to prove it. But if a man does not believe in waiting for inspiration, what is his idea in writing at all? It is like a man saying that he does not believe in waiting for love, that one woman is very much like another as far as he is concerned, that those who express finical preferences are not serious citizens concerned only with keeping up the birthrate....

Nevertheless it must be admitted

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that the Trollopian tradition has its fascinations for those who, having some turn for writing, are preoccupied more with the fact of achievement than the fun of the thing. The great point, they feel, is to get it *done* (and paid for). They compose direct onto a typewriter, it is rumored, and even employ a secretary to take it down. And when the shift is over, one supposes they go away and play golf. No doubt in time the secretary is able to cope with the work unaided. It is difficult to see why not.

To the Lieutenant of Reserve, however, these considerations were not of much importance. This humdrum method of intensive quantity-production might destroy the soul if persisted in for years. He had no such intention. He merely wished to see whether it could be carried on for a short while. And when he and his baggage were tumbled off the destroyer into a picket-boat and carried aboard of a sloop-of-war bound for Malta, he began to nerve himself for the trial. The time had come, he felt, to improve the shining hour.

For of course, with that curious self-deception that seems to give an air of unreality to everything an author says to himself, he was quite sure he knew what it was he had to write. Quite sure. It was to be an article of, say three or four thousand words. There was to be no nonsense about "getting stuck" in the middle of it, or changing it into something else and making it longer. He would write it in his bunk, pad propped up on knee, for there is always too much noise in these ward-rooms with the gramophone in one corner, the paymaster's typewriter going in another, and half-a-dozen men playing cards in between. And smiling a little, he requested a mess-rating to show him his cabin.

A sloop, the uninitiated may be informed, is not a vessel primarily designed to encourage the production of literature. She is, on the contrary, a slender, two-funneled, wasp-waisted affair of undeniable usefulness during what were known as "hostilities". She is subdivided into minute spaces by steel bulkheads with dished and battened rubber-jointed doors. The ordinary pathways of humanity are encumbered by innumerable wheels, plugs, pipes, wires, extension rods, and screwed down hatchways. And when it became necessary to send home Lieutenants of Reserve and many other ranks and ratings, so that a grateful country might pay them off and leave them to shift for themselves, the Navy found it increasingly difficult to find passages for them, and decided to go into the passenger business itself. And the world having been made perfectly safe for democracy, it was felt that anything savoring of comfort would be out of place in their ships. The stern, iron-bound and rock-ribbed veterans who were coming home would scorn the soft delights of a wire mattress or shaving glass. These ammunition-chambers, for example, are the very thing. Fix 'em up. And in a few hours four bunks would be fitted up in a space about the size of an ordinary office strong-room. There is neither light nor ventilation; but no matter. Give 'em a couple of electrics. They're only here for a few days anyhow.

And here we are! There are three other Lieutenants of Reserve in the other three bunks and the conversation is general. The gentleman below me, who is smoking strong Turkish cigarettes, has just come down from the Black Sea where he has been employed resuscitating a temporarily defunct Russian cruiser. Some job,

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he avers. The Russians may be great idealists and artists; they may even have a knack at the ballet and show us a thing or two about novel-writing, but they are out of their element as sailormen. You cannot navigate a ship with the wild, free movement of the figures in a Bakst design. You must cultivate a different attitude toward material forces in an engine-room than is adumbrated in modern Russian fiction. This is corroborated by Mr. Top-Bunk on the other side. Fine job they'd given him, a respectable engineer. Did we know Novorossiisk at all? Yes, we chimed, we'd loaded grain there in the old days. Up the River Bug, wasn't it? Yep. Well, a place not so far up, Ekaterin-something. They'd mussed up the electric-power plant. We had to get it going again. To begin with, these idealists, these makers of a new and happier world, had let the boilers go short of water, had brought down the furnace-crowns and started a good many stays. Also they had cut a good deal of indispensable copper away from the switchboard and, presumably, sold it. Or perhaps they were merely putting their theories into practice and dividing up the plant among the community. However, it didn't signify, because while we were making up our plans, on the boat, and trying to figure out how much of the original wreckage would come in again, one of the local enthusiasts felt he couldn't wait any longer for the Millennium and flung an armful of hand-grenades through the shattered windows of the power-house. We could imagine what happened among those dynamos and turbine-cases.

Mr. Lower-Bunk on the other side doesn't say much except that he'd been mine-sweeping. He says very little all the way to Malta. Sweepers very rarely have much to say. They have a habit of quiet reticence, engendered by the curious life they lead, a life balanced on the very knife-edge of disaster. They generally get grey over the ears and their movements are deliberate and cautious, after the manner of men who dwell in the presence of high explosives. It occurs to me suddenly that these men are all about to vanish, to disappear from public view, and we shall have no record of their spiritual adventures during the last few years. In a month or so at most they will have doffed their naval uniforms and (much to their relief) put on civilian garb once more. I say we shall have no record of their spiritual adventures. We have tales of their doings as heroes, no doubt; but that is not the same thing. I suppose, if the truth be told, a good many of them have had no adventures of this description. A surgeon with whom I sailed, a dry satirical person of exceptional mental powers, once enunciated to me a particularly brutal theory to account for this gap in our literature. Just as, he asserted, just as below a certain stage in the animal kingdom the nervous system becomes so rudimentary and mechanical that pain as we know it is non-existent, so, below a certain social level in civilized life the emotions are largely an instinctive response to unconscious stimuli applied to actual cases.

This mine-sweeping Lieutenant of Reserve for example, who lives in a diminutive brick subdivision of a long edifice in a long road a long way out of Cardiff, and who enjoys having his tea in the kitchen with his coat off and the cat on his knee, according to my surgical friend, is unable to comprehend within himself the emotions inspired by the fine arts, by great literature or by great beauty.

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Now this seemed to me unfair, and I adduced as an argument the fact that these people often appreciated fine literature. Nothing could have been more unfortunate! I had delivered myself into his hands. He simply asked me how I knew. By what method of calibration were we to gauge the *ability* of these people to appreciate anything of the sort? Did I ever hear these people *talking* about books, or art or beauty? I was silent, and he went on as though he enjoyed it. Reading, he informed me, was no evidence whatever. Reading the written characters in a printed book implied no comprehension of the moods inspiring the book. Universal education had taught these people to go through the various external mental processes, and no doubt the words did convey some rough and ready meaning to their minds, just as a monkey who has been taught to ride a bicycle had some sort of crude conception of momentum and equilibrium. But as for actually entering into the full intention of the artist, why, look at the books they generally read, look at the pictures they preferred, look (and here I got up and walked away) at the women they married!

I mention this surgeon because I met him again in Malta. After four days of ceaseless and intolerable rolling, pitching, and shaking, during which, I calculated, Trollope would have written a novel and a half, but which added not a word to my article, we raised Malta, and passing under the great guns of the fortifications, anchored in the Grand Harbor of Valletta. And I met him in the Strada Reale. Sooner or later one meets every man one has ever sailed with in the Strada Reale. The paymaster who was so rude to you about an advance of pay in Scapa Flow, the airman who cleaned you out at poker at Salonika, the engineer who tried to borrow from you in Bizerta, the senior naval officer who refused you leave in Suez,—you will encounter them all sooner or later in the Strada Reale. And after I had deposited my baggage in one of the vaulted chambers which pass for bedrooms within the enormous walls of the Angleterre, on the Strada St. Lucia, we adjourned to the great square in front of the Libreria and sat at a little table.

And the thought that comes to me as we sit at the little table,—just out of the stream of cheerful people who pour up and down the Strada Reale and seem to have no other occupation, and in the shadow of the great honey-colored walls of the Governor's Palace,—is that the Surgeon will not only prevent my getting on with my article but will probably adduce half a dozen excellent reasons why it should not be written. He has a thin chilly smile which is amusing enough in the ward-room but which acts like a blight upon one's inspiration. He is not satisfied with proving that everything has been done. He goes on to show conclusively that it wasn't worth doing anyway. The tender shoots of fancy, the delicate flowers of thought, perish in the icy wind of his mentality. The fact is, it is not necessary for him to confess that he has never written a line, couldn't write a line, and never intends to write a line. It sticks out all over. He lacks that naïveté, that soft spot in his brain, that shy simplicity, which brackets the artist with the tramp, the child, and the village idiot. He is "all there" as we say, and one must not be afraid to confess that an artist is very rarely "all there". I do not offer this explanation to him, of course. His enjoyment of it would be too offensive. And when I tell him

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of my misgivings about Trollope, the smile irradiates his thin intellectual features. He fails to see why a man shouldn't work at writing precisely the same as he works at anything else. "If he's to get anything *done*," he adds.

"But don't you see", I argue weakly, "the artist isn't particularly keen on getting a thing *done*, as you call it? He gets his pleasure out of doing it, playing with it, fooling with it, if you like. The mere completion of it is an incident. Can't you see?"

But he couldn't. These efficient people never can see a thing like that. They mutter "amateur", and light a fresh cigar. They are like first-class passengers on a liner,—bright, well-dressed, well-mannered, and accomplished people, being carried they know not how across a dark and mysterious world of heaving waters. They can explain everything without knowing much about anything. They are the idle rich of the intellectual world. They—

"What did you say was the title of that article you were going to write?" asked the Surgeon.

"Well", I said slowly, "I *was* going to call it 'The Shining Hour', but I don't know if after all..."

"Well, why don't you get on with it then?" he inquired, and he snickered. "It sounds all right," he added, and finished his Italian vermouth. "Have another. It may give you an idea!"

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HEAVEN'S LITTLE IRONIES

BY JAMES LANE ALLEN

SCENE: *A pleasant day of unending summer in Paradise—not what we should have called summer, should have called a day. A quiet hour of the endless afternoon, if it was afternoon, if there were hours. A landscape—not actual land of course—stretching away in enrapturing vistas of white and rosy clouds unaqueous and banks of pearl, so to speak: mother of pearl, perhaps, immortal mother of pearl. Vales of eternal verdure, certainly not grass, either. Here and there crags and veins of gold, real gold—as a concession and everlasting appeasement to a goodly number of the saints.*

Two shapes reclining on a lovely knoll of the near landscape, enjoying their virtues and the forgiveness of their sins, without which forgiveness they and their virtues might have been elsewhere. Consciousness of indestructible safety enabling them to take life—that is, take eternity—easily. Their long white pinions folded lazily.

1ST S. How peaceful it is!

2ND S. And yet a thought disturbs me!

1ST S. What?

2ND S. Dread of the shape that wanders forever through Heaven with its sorrow.

1ST S. Oh, yes! The shape that sooner or later approaches everyone and pours out its tale of woe.

2ND S. Sooner or later it will pour out its tale of woe for us—and all over us. I wonder we have escaped so long.

1ST S. How strange that any sorrow ever got into Heaven where we thought there should be none!

2ND S. It ought to be in Hell where there must be shapes enough for it to torture. Satan could use it as a slow pestilence worse than flame. Why should it be allowed at large here, forever to bore us to death where we cannot die!

1ST S. If it ever accosts us, we'd best say little. Let it pour out its sorrow and pass on.

2ND S. And we'll disturb ourselves with no sympathy for it. After all the difficulty we had in getting here, we want to be happy. I do!

1ST S. How peaceful it is!

[*Around a nearby bend of the landscape of cloud and pearl and gold a third shape comes slowly into view, wandering solitary, its wings long stiffened with disuse. Thus of old, in the brevity of the course of time, Hamlet in sable was seen to tread the stage with memory surcharged and with a thought too great for his frame. A flock of snow-white shapes, flying low and catching sight of this wing-folded solitary wandering one, scatter in different directions, hurrying each on*

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quickened pinions to escape in the delectable roominess of the infinite.]

1ST S. There it is now! It has discovered us! It starts this way.

2ND S. Heaven forbid! No, Heaven allows it! Then let's be off!

1ST S. Why not suffer it to speak now? Then we shall no longer have to dread it. We'll say little and it will not linger.

2ND S. I am not sure but I'll speak my mind to it.

3RD S. [*Approaches and reclines unasked in front of the two.*] I believe I have not seen you before. There are so many, infinite and infinite numbers. My memory is not clear as to all I have met. I wish to miss none.

2ND S. You have never seen us. But we have heard of you. Oh, yes! We have heard of you!

1ST S. You are not unknown to us.

3RD S. That is not wonderful. How could you not have heard of one whose sorrow fills all Heaven.

2ND S. There are no sorrows in Heaven! Through some crack, it seems, a bore got in.

3RD S. I know I am in Heaven and I know I have a sorrow! You shall hear and judge for yourselves.

2ND S. I heard enough of other people's troubles when I was on earth: I am here for a rest.

3RD S. You never on earth heard of a trouble such as mine!

2ND S. So they all said. I take your word for it! Please withhold the proof!

1ST S. Would it take long for you to tell us?

3RD S. Long! Certainly there is plenty of time here! No one can complain of lack of time, not here!

2ND S. All our time is taken!

1ST S. Tell us briefly—so many are waiting to hear!

3RD S. Yes, they are eagerly waiting to hear me! I can tell you in a breath—that old expression! Just as I had gotten ready at last to write the Great American Novel, I died!

2ND S. You call that a sorrow?

3RD S. Why, yes, I call it a sorrow! What do you call it?

2ND S. I am not calling names in Heaven, but I'd never call it a sorrow!

3RD S. You were a disagreeable man on earth, I can see that!

2ND S. I certainly hated bores, God be praised!

1ST S. You mean that you are forever unhappy because you were brought to Heaven on a given date, instead of being left longer on earth to write the novel you speak of?

3RD S. Why, of course! Could Heaven make up to me for a loss like that—leaving my great work unwritten on earth? I should have gotten to Heaven anyhow: the work would have made me immortal. I should have had Heaven and my masterpiece both!

2ND S. Has it ever occurred to you that your death was arranged and timed to keep you from writing your novel: God is merciful?

3RD S. The redeemed sometimes drop curious remarks! You were a bad man; you had a sharp tongue and a sour temper; you were *mean.*

1ST S. Are you sure that you would have written the Great American Novel, even if you had not been transferred prematurely to Eternity where there is no taste for fiction?

3RD S. Why, yes, I am sure! Did I not know? Did I not feel it in me? Was it not there clear in my mind, ready and waiting to be written?

1ST S. But were there not others, many others, who thought the same thing?

3RD S. Impostors! Idle dreamers! Failures! Taking advantage of the sheeplike simple people! You see that

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had been the faith and the hope of the nation—that such a great work would appear in the fulness of time. They fed upon it; it was their green pasture. So long it had been prophesied! It had become a vision in the eyes of the whole people. From time to time false prophets arose, declaring that the Great American Novel had at last appeared. There were lying publishers who proclaimed this—knowing they lied. There were lying critics who announced that they had discovered it, working in collusion with the publishers and knowing *they* lied! You will find none of them here—those lying publishers, those lying critics! At last the hour of fulfilment drew nigh. I was the chosen one—when I died!

2ND S. Who chose you? Yourself?

3RD S. Hell will get you yet!

1ST S. Of what was it you died—prematurely, as you think?

3RD S. I do not know in the very end. The last I remember was I had indigestion. I do not know how I ever came to have indigestion. I ate very little and what I did eat always agreed with me. I saw to that. I never committed the slightest indiscretion in diet. I saw to that. It was part of the care I took to keep myself in perfect condition to write my great book. I did everything, I overlooked nothing,—

2ND S. Except the great book!

3RD S. Have I to remind you that in Heaven no one ever interrupts anyone?

1ST S. It was indigestion, then, as you were saying.

3RD S. After the indigestion started, I think I remember there was trouble with the circulation—which was blocked in the brain—

2ND S. Don't you suppose it was the Great Novel that blocked the circulation, filled up the arteries, split their walls, cracked the skull! The kernel growing to be too big for the shell of the too small nut?

3RD S. I refuse to take further notice of you! You do not belong here: God understands that.

1ST S. Aren't you afraid that in time—in eternity, that is—this subject will get on your nerves?

3RD S. Do you forget that I haven't any nerves?

2ND S. I do not forget that you have heavenly nerve.

1ST S. I mean, will you not grow too fondly wedded to your sorrow?

3RD S. I shouldn't think it exactly delicate to speak of being fondly *wedded* to anything, not here! I am content to say that I am gloriously eternalized with my glorious grief and disappointment.

2ND S. Then be gloriously eternalized with it and be gloriously begone! Fly away with you! We're trying to get a little rest.

3RD S. [*Rising and withdrawing a short distance, turns and speaks dryly.*] You two are the only ill-mannered ones in all the heavenly host. God is indeed merciful—to let you be here. I leave you alone with Him gladly. [*Walks away, the stiff edges of its pinions cutting little furrows across the cloudy floor.*]

2ND S. [*Calling after it.*] Thank you! We are glad to be left alone with Him!

1ST S. I do not mind telling you that I was the head of a great publishing house. We examined a number of his things which were submitted to us from time to time by an agency for unsuccessful authors. There was nothing in them. We finally declined even to look at any more.

2ND S. Don't I know? I do not mind telling you that I was a great

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successful critic. From time to time his things came to me from one publisher after another who had brought them out against hope. Don't I know? I had to read them and review them.

1ST S. Here he is now, making Heaven ring with what he would have done if he had not died!

2ND S. One of those failures who blamed others because they failed, who thought themselves martyrs to every circumstance. He, after having been martyr to everything else, at last thought he was a martyr to the providence of God! Nothing else would let him succeed and finally God wouldn't!

1ST S. He got all his happiness in life out of being miserable; now he feels himself infinitely blessed in the possession of an immortal sorrow!

2ND S. Heaven has its little ironies. Here are you, a publisher who wouldn't touch his stuff. Here am I who couldn't read it and wouldn't praise it. Here are we, a great successful publisher, a great successful critic, and we are nobodies. How could a publisher be much of anything in Heaven? How could a critic? But he—he whom we despised and rejected will plainly strut in Paradise forever.

1ST S. I'll admit that once or twice I announced to a waiting world that I was bringing out the Great American Novel! But I don't like to go into that: it was what made it difficult for me to get here.

2ND S. I might as well admit I gave out two or three times that I had discovered the Great American Novel. Perhaps I wasn't quite sure enough—that was forgiven me. Perhaps my motives were not as pure as pearl: that was pardoned.

1ST S. How natural after all that the only country heard of in Heaven should be the United States! The American Invasion! Not Heaven itself could keep some American from reaching here with a boast of a greatest thing he was going to do!

2ND S. Yes! No matter when the final curtain had rung down on human affairs, there would have been many people in the United States to complain that Judgment Day occurred just as the greatest country in the world was about to get into action: that now it would never be known what the United States could really do!

1ST S. Shall we fly awhile?

2ND S. I have nothing else before me.

1ST S. [*As they take wing.*] Once to have been a publisher who was not an angel; now to be an angel who is not a publisher! I am not dissatisfied. But it was a pleasant thing—*that:* being lord of creation.

2ND S. To have had one quill and no wings; to have a pair of wings and not a quill! I do not complain that here there is nothing to complain of. But as you say—it was a pleasant thing—*that:* being judge of all the earth.

1ST S. If I could only bring out something here once in a while—just to show them!... [*Shaking its pinions as the act of a creature that is forbidden to crow but retains the gesture.*]

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MURRAY HILL ON HIS TRAVELS

INDIANAPOLIS, *July*, 1920.

NOW I have a theory of human life. It has been steadily growing on me for a number of years, the conviction that there is a truth in it. As I look back into my own life I cannot see that I ever did anything of my own volition. Of course, at the times when I have been confronted with two, or more, courses of action, I have always believed that, weighing the matter in my mind, I myself made a decision, based on my reason and experience. And now when such a situation arises I continue to think the same. But curiously enough, I recognize afterward that I did no such thing.

Anyone (it seems to me) can act only in one way, that is, in accord with his heredity, environment, and character. When he chooses (as he thinks he does) one way rather than another, and when the decision (so to call it) is a close one, it is that there is within him something, the weight of a grain or two of which turns the balance. He could not possibly have acted other than he did, as all his thoughts and actions can only be in character. I should think that any serious novelist would back me up in this idea, for having given a figure in his story heredity, environment, and character, doesn't he (the novelist), knowing his man, know beforehand exactly what he will do in any given situation?

Mr. Tarkington (frowning): "Y-yes; of course."

Mr. Hill: "And can the novelist, if he has any artistic conscience—can *you* make a fictional character do this or that, as you select, in order, say, to lead the story to some kind of an ending you fancy?"

Mr. Tarkington (frowning harder): "Not now. I used to write stories that way. Used to get stumped, and" (broad grin) "try to think up what I'd have happen next. Now" (in deadly earnest) "I can only work from the inside out. The whole thing turns on character. And in that kind of writing about the only thing you can choose is your setting, the place where you are going to lay your story.

"You follow the lead of your characters," he said. "They drag you on, and about the only fun you get out of the thing is the way it is done—now and then a paragraph pleases you by the way you have turned it."

He spoke of the novel he was now writing, to be called "Alice Adams", the name of the heroine, who is Alys Adams when the story opens. He "hated"it, that book, and all the people in it. And he didn't think anybody would ever read it.

"But that", I said, "is precisely what you told me about 'The Magnificent Ambersons' when you were writing it. Enough people read that."

"I know", he said, "but this is much worse. The people are such a rotten, insignificant lot, and nothing ever happens except a continual piling up of petty detail. Nobody will want it."

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There's another idea of mine. The young lady of whom I have spoken tells me that we no longer say, "the older I get", but "the longer I live". Well, then, the longer I live, the more clearly do I see that my life has been all of a piece.

> Misfortunes and troubles a many have proved me;
> One or two women (God bless them) have loved me.

I don't know where I got that jingle, maybe's it's Henley. And doubtless, I've got it pretty much twisted. Anyhow, I've had, in full measure, my share of that hope deferred which maketh the heart sick, and so also have I had many a black eye given my spirit. But, I see it now as plain as print, all that has happened to me, which frequently at the time of its occurrence I thought was lamentable, has proved to have been a series of most successful contributions to the march of my years. For, more times than one, when my life has appeared to me (and to all observers) to have been quite wrecked, this has but been like (as many believe of that) death in this: it was the pains of birth into a better world.

This turns up in my mind the subject of jobs, and concerning them my theory. I hold, and I hold it strongly, that (contrary to general belief) it is well for a man (a man, that is, of good calibre) frequently to be fired. Of course, in the day of the decline of his powers, such an incident might turn out to be a very sad thing. But when health, and lust, and envy, and pride are yet strong within a man, such a happening is a jolt in an upward direction. This belief, at any rate, is the result of my observation—and experience. I thank the mysterious and beautiful stars that I have been "canned" from a number of "punk" jobs, where otherwise I might be now.

But that is not all that I think; I have yet other "thinks" coming. My life, as I said, has been all of a piece. Every part has exactly dovetailed into the whole, like a picture puzzle rightly put together. Without this there could not have been that. And what is more, everything that has occurred to me has occurred at the time proper for the best results from it.

We frequently hear said, by persons who have waited long for it to come down heads, "Now, why couldn't this have come to me ten (or something like that) years ago?" Nay! believe you me, 'twouldn't have been so well. They would not then have been prepared to receive it to the best advantage.

In fact this (whatever it was) *couldn't* have come to them before it did. Because, if anything can be more clearly seen than a pike-staff on a hill, it is that our lives are the product of a preordained design, in arrangement the result of consummate art, and to wise ends which we wot not of. I waved my cigarette, for (you will admit) I had spoken remarkably well.

"Exactly the opposite", said Tarkington knitting his brows, "of the Conrad philosophy." Deep were those great perpendicular lines in his forehead which speak of his habit of intense concentration. "Yes," he said, "it does seem that the palette is scraped, and often the scraping is harsh, always to make one a better workman.

"And, perhaps," he added, "if Conrad would look more into himself, instead of looking on at the world around him, he'd get that idea more."

I clapped my heels against the sides of the hobby-horse I had mounted, as Sterne would say, and on I galloped.

And I knew that certain things must have been laid up in store for

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me, before they happened, for of them I have had strange premonitions. One instance, this: one time, a young woman whom before I had never seen (nor of her had I ever heard) walked rapidly past me. I hardly saw her then, as toward her path it happened my back was partly turned. I *felt*, rather than saw her, go by, but within me somewhere I got a sort of electric jolt. I turned quickly then to glance after her, but she had passed behind a stairway. For long, I forgot the matter, and it was only long afterward that I remembered it—sometime after, a couple of years later, this young woman had come as closely perhaps as anyone could come into my life.

Then take the matter of this present trip of mine. How do you explain that? I know not how many months before I was suddenly shot, so to say, off into space, an idea had (fathered by I know not what) taken birth in my mind. Flickering at first was its life, then stronger and stronger it grew, until there no longer remained doubt that an event of consequence to me was approaching. I was only slightly mistaken in the matter of the time of its occurrence.

The idea was this: that this coming autumn (though it came in the spring) something new in my career was to happen to me for my good. I didn't know whether (as has several times happened to me before) someone was to come along and handsomely present me with a much better job. Or whether I should suddenly be moved to strike out and get one. Or what. But I reckoned up my years to my coming birthday in July; and I knew, as well as you know that you are sitting there, that a time was near at hand when whatever force it is that controls my life had decreed that I must be moving on.

A funny thing, too, this: oh! some months ago it was, that the thought began to dawn on me that it was about time for a fellow in the fading of his thirties to think about unlocking the accumulated riches of his life and to write his autobiography. I determined to begin, but the days, and the weeks, went by, and I never found the time, or in my little leisure had I the strength, to make a start upon the thing. But all the while I knew that pretty soon I should write an autobiography.

Then, on a sudden, in pops this man who owns THE BOOKMAN (along with considerable other publishing property) and says, in effect (though unless he's a clairvoyant, he couldn't have known a bit of what was in my mind), clear out now, go write your old autobiography, and don't let me see you around here for at least three months. So came to pass that which was, as my friend James Huneker puts it, on the laps of the "Gallery Gods". And if, after its fashion, this book isn't a (spiritual) autobiography, what, I'd like to know, is it?

This brings us to another thing. I am writing this book because I've *got* to, not because I particularly want to; I'd much rather (this summer weather) be loafing around and inviting my soul, or enjoying in greater number the multitude of social invitations so kindly extended to me. And the force pressing upon me which drives me to write the book, comes not from without (I could get by, doing scrappier stuff, much less in amount and easier to do), but from within. It may be a "punk" book. Whether or not it is that, indeed, is little on my mind. The point is, that I can have no peace with the world, or myself, or the devil until the durn thing's done.

So when we say that heredity and

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environment and all that sort of thing fixes up our affairs for us ahead of time, we do not mean that we can let up striving any the less.

"Sure", said Mr. Tarkington, nodding, "you don't just go and lie down on a sofa."

"Get up!" said I, to my hobby-horse, and on we cantered.

Now, when my most interesting young feminine friend, the Christian Scientist, promulgates the doctrine that the matter rests with us (as we have the power) to shape our environment, rather than that we must remain in the clutch of it—how am I going to get around that? 'Tis simple enough!

Why does one man born in a squalid, debased, and illiterate environment remain in it? And why does another man entered in the same sort of show drive his way out of it? Because in the one man there was implanted a mysterious something which drove him to force his way out, and in the other man (heaven alone knows why!) there wasn't.

"Decided long before they were born," agreed Mr. Tarkington.

In the matter, however, of whether your pain is in your finger or in your mind, he was somewhat inclined to think that "they" are pretty much in the right about it. For pain could only be a thing you were conscious of —a sensation.

And so the talk turned again.

It is, at any rate (to use an excellent phrase frequently employed by my excellent friend, Royal Cortissoz), a "ponderable idea". That is, *I could not*, you see, have died that April day on Illinois Street. For no man can die until his course is run, until (in other words) he has no further need of this world. There was, presumably, yet much for me to do and to learn. Nonsense! Why is a tiny baby snatched away? Why the senseless, as it seems, loss to us of such brilliant young minds as Rupert Brooke, Joyce Kilmer (my more than brother), and unnumbered others? Why does a man at the height of his powers meet, as we say, an "untimely death"? Why does another, never (as again we say) "of much account", linger on to ninety years, a score of them bedridden? Why disasters, by battle, by sea, starvation, fire and flood, to wipe out human lives to the number of the population of cities? Why does one man bear, as the term is, a "charmed life", and walk all unscathed through a boiling furnace? And why does another ("fated", as we sometimes feel) get plugged at the first shot? I hasten to assure you, I do not know.

Tarkington, who had been rather slouching forward, quickly straightened up at the words, "I do not know". Perhaps he was astonished that I admitted there was anything I could not tell him.

A number of years ago, I had the good fortune to be about a good deal with the late John H. Twachtman. I remember one time, when somebody said to him of such or such a painter, that he had never done but one good thing, and that was "by accident". "No beautiful thing", was Twachtman's reply, "was ever made by accident." Quite so! And may it not also be that no man ever, in the newspaper headline phrase, "meets death by accident"?

"That is my position exactly", said Tarkington, going back to the concluding words of my preceding paragraph, "in all this spiritualism business: we don't know enough about the thing to know anything about it."

He even startled me by the extent of his reading in the more important

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literature of the subject, which (so well has he coordinated it) he briefly reviewed in a lump. He has seen tables moved without any explainable agency. Asserts that because you cannot explain why a table should want to cut up, it does not follow that it is inspired to do so by the dead. Has heard various kinds of "raps", coming from no source discernible to him. Regards that as evidence only that raps can come, or be made to come, in a manner mysterious to you and me. Has seen "messages" "received". I do not recall whether or not he said he had ever seen any of the filmy apparitions which are taken to be "spirits". But 'tis no matter about that.

His conclusion is simply that there is in the world some force, or power, or what not, which we do not now understand, and which "we are yet a long way off from knowing anything about". As to "communications" he made the remark, highly interesting to me, that we should not scoff at them because they may be, to us, silly, foolish, and without any point—because we cannot possibly know what a plane of intelligence exists among spirits departed from our sort of life; if such spirits there be. Finally, he affirmed that so far in all our contact with these phenomena there has never been established a case of "identity"—not one. "But", with an upward flinging gesture, "of course, if we could find only one, it's all off—that would be enough."

A clock struck twelve.

And so, to modernize young Franklin P. Adams's great friend (and constant source of copy), Pepys, in a cab with my host back again to my lodgings.

* * * *

The barbers in this shop (this is the following day), as is frequently the case in Indianapolis, are what is generally called "colored" men. The barber I drew was a man after my own heart, that is, he was (what Carlyle, I believe it was) called a communicating animal. I told him, by way of starting the ball, that I had recently come from New York. He said that when they used to have excursion rates with stop-over privileges, he had been in the habit of spending a couple of weeks in New York every summer. He added that he didn't know whether he would care to go there now, as since the country had gone dry he probably would not have so gay a time as formerly.

He was not averse to prohibition, he said, as he thought it was rather good for him,—at any rate it caused him to save more money. For the past five years, he told me, he had been pretty straight, but there had been a time in his life when the situation was, as he put it, "perilous". He was the kind of man, I say, that I love, for he talked (as I do) about himself, open, frank, his life an open book to any that would listen.

Shaved, he asked me if I would have a face massage. I did not feel that I stood much in need of such a thing, but I was not willing to part quickly with the society of a fellow of such golden talk as his. He explained to me the ritual of his domestic life on Sundays. He and his wife—there were, he said, only two of them—went to church in the morning. Then they came home and read the papers, or perhaps took a "nap". They usually had friends in to dinner, and afterward cranked up the victrola. In the evening they usually started out for the "picture shows", and sometimes did three of them before again going home.

Now as I sat in the barber chair and

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this dark-skinned and very real gentleman attended me, I envied that estimable man. His life was wholesome and fine—and he was happy. Whereas, I, God help me! as far back, nearly, as my memory can reach, I have been storm-tossed and miserable; I have found for my soul no abiding city. There was a day (as George Moore says of himself) when my dream was painting. I came to draw with more than passable art, but always I hungered after perfection; and in this world but a very few things done by men in a generation attain to that. Then after some years, it was literature that claimed me. And I came to write, as I believe, with more than passable art. But I was possessed by an illusion. I thought that the pursuit of truth and beauty, and to seek for the accomplishment of fame, was enough; certainly it is a long and a hard, a very hard task for a man to set himself. And, indeed, there have been men, great artists among them, who have lived by these things, and, though absolute perfection has mostly ever fled before them, have died reasonably content with their achievements.

In the delectable and enduring novel by the Reverend Laurence Sterne, "Tristram Shandy, Gentleman", when the messenger arrives to announce that Bobby is dead, the fat scullion exclaims: "So am not I!" Well, as to being content with the pursuit of literature, there came a time, not so long ago, when I had to say to myself, so am not I. I had even attained to (what for years I had night and day burned to have) something of a literary reputation. I confesss that in my heart this is little to me now. I am ambitious in the sense that I cannot write anything at all without doing it as well as I am able. And to be able to make anything like literature, and to read with gusto great literature, is well enough, for contact with literature at its best is, of course, capable of a vastly ennobling influence on the mind. But literature, books and writing, began to fail me. There was in this world, I came to know, something else, something more, of which my spirit had need. As time went on, great need. So it was I came to think much on religion. Perhaps I should have turned, as a frustrated child to its nurse, to the church. But what church? What could I believe? Had I,—and this, it seems to me, in such matters a very necessary thing, —the religious temperament? And how would I work in church harness? To these questions I have no answer yet. But in this I have faith: as the melons ripen on the vine, and fruit upon the tree, so in due season shall my soul reach its destined maturity.

In seeking for one interest which I had not, and which might be the thing which would give me the new zest in living that I needed, the most curious, and even comical, ideas occurred to me. One of these ideas, though I did not think it comical at the time, was this: I have never paid any particular attention to how I got myself up in the matter of dress, whether or not my suit was well-pressed, my shoes newly polished, and so on. I have worn the same sort of collar, and had my hair cut and parted it in the same way, for years and years, regardless of the changing fashions in these things. And whenever, at periods remote one from another, I bought a new necktie, I had been in the habit of saying to the haberdasher man, "Gim'me a tie just like the one I have on." Also I have associated much more with men than with women,

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and the conventions of polite society have been to me of little moment.

Well, I got a great notion that a very spirited thing for me to do would be suddenly to become very fashionable. I never, I believe I can say, have done anything in my life that I did not do well. And my idea was not to become merely very respectable, mildly fashionable. I was to be a regular sensation. I was to out-fop Max Beerbohm. I regretted that I lived in America. I wished I were a Londoner, so that I could wear a top-hat and a cutaway coat in the daytime, on weekdays at business. I would be equally perfect in the art of dress with young Wales. I brooded a good deal on this matter, and then the mood passed. I was afraid that here again another fine art would, and that perhaps soon, fail me. Indeed, I saw, written on the wall, that the spirit of man could not live by art alone.

However, as in the matter of my double-barreled suitcase, I'll take no further thought as to this. For now I know that on a day appropriate to the transaction, when I shall be, it may be, going along the highway on quite another errand bent, I shall, like Paul, suddenly see in a window of my mind, that which I need to fulfil my soul's good.

But I must return to my friend, my barber. I say "my friend" not lightly, for those that one has are taken, or drift whither away; or again by some mischance of misunderstanding, the bonds are loosened or broken; and it was the wise counsel of a very wise man when Samuel Johnson cautioned us to "keep our friendships in good repair". He told me, my barber, that he had been experimenting with making "the stuff" at home now. He had produced several concoctions, not bad; but the best of all he had made, and that was very fine, was some apricot brandy. But this he kept for himself alone; he gave none of it away, for did he stand his friends a treat from his store it would become noised about, "Jim has something great up at his house, you'd better look in." No, indeed, he gave his friends "a little cake or something", but he kept his bottle for his own pleasure. A good man, and a shrewd one. I wish him well.

Then I went out from that barber shop where so much wisdom had been given me. And all the air was ringing with the gay sounds of a busy, prosperous, happy, beautiful city. The streets were filled with my own kind, people, hurrying to and fro. Motor-cars were parked in battalions everywhere. After several blocks of peering into faces, I came and stood before the office building of the Indianapolis "News", and read, amid a throng likewise engaged, the bulletins posted in the windows there. I read the weather forecast, about what Marshal Foch was up to now, the present doings of the Marion County Grand Jury, and the latest activities of the Sinn Feiners. Then I came upon a sheet racy of the soil. It said: "Four horses and a cow burn to death and auto destroyed when barn burns in Edgemont Street today."

Well, I thought, being at the gentleman's front door, I'd go up and see the editor of the paper, Louis Howland (brother of Hewitt Hanson), whom I had met one time before. I diffidently asked the office boy, following my custom in the East (where it is no slight trick to break into the sanctum of the editor of a great newspaper) if he thought it would be possible for me in time to see Mr. Howland. With a large, open-hearted gesture toward the proper door, he replied: "Walk right in."

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I found him, himself typing an editorial on yellow copy paper. A fine Johnsonian figure of a man, with a graying shock of hair, not too well-dressed—for which (among other things) I greatly liked him. I was further attracted to him when I found that he belonged to the brotherhood: had died several times from acute indigestion. A memorable figure, type in the tradition of our line of great editors, and esteemed in his profession, I believe, as one of the best editorial writers in the country.

While I was in the shop, why not look in at what those there call the Idle Ward and see my old friend "Bill" Herschell? Whose name when printed, but never otherwise, is William. A journalist-poet of city life and homely things, and far from a bad one. A jovial human being somewhat on the Don Marquis order, only louder.

He made me known to "Kin" Hubbard, a sharer of these quarters, who seventeen years ago created "Abe Martin", and has kept him going strong ever since. And here I got quite a shock. I suppose I had fancied there would be something at least a shade homespun in himself in the originator of the Brown County philosopher with the bark on. The immaculate gentleman with the aristocratic face, whom I met, took from his upper waistcoat pocket a pair of these fly-open kind of shell-rimmed glasses, and adjusting them to his patrician nose, conversed with a sort of quiet, old world dignity. In the open air, and in theatre lobbies, he carries, according to Herschell, a "blonde" cane.

* * * *

The presence of Riley is still strong in the community of his friends and neighbors. Tarkington, Hewitt Howland, and numerous others, frequently interlard their talk with such remarks as, "As Riley would have put it," or "As Riley used to say."

"Speaking of 'out-fopping' Beerbohm," remarked Dr. McCulloch, as he reclined on a couch in an inner office, "reminds me. It was many years ago. Riley took it into his head to out-fop Amos—Amos Walker, one of his early managers. He quarreled with him later, as he did with all his managers. Well, Amos was the most perfect ever seen: spats in season, tail coat, neatly striped grey trousers, ornamental vest, with little vines on trellises climbing up, beautiful tie, stickpin with a bird's claw clasping a stone.

"Amos used to go round to the old Meridian Club, forerunner here of the present University Club. There one day he saw for the first time some of the old boys playing dominoes. He stood for quite a while behind one of them."

(Amos it appeared stuttered in his speech. I cannot undertake to render Dr. McCulloch's inimitable imitation of the stutter.)

"Finally Amos said: 'Might I ask what the game is you're playing?'

"The player before him turned his eyes slowly upward. 'Dominoes,' he uttered.

" 'New game?' inquired Amos.

" 'Oh! no,' replied the player, 'very old game, must be fifty, a hundred years, maybe centuries old.'

" 'Well,' said Amos, 'when I was a young man I joined the army, not so much perhaps from patriotism, as because of a love of excitement. But,' he added, 'that was before I had ever seen this game played.'

"When Amos died", continued McCulloch, "several mutual friends went to Riley and said to him: 'Now this quarrel between you and Amos has been a cause of deep distress to a

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great many of us—to your friends and to Amos's friends. But now that Amos is gone it should be all over, forgotten. Why don't you go see Amos's widow, and make peace with her?'

"Silence for a good while. Then Riley said he would. So he went to Amos's house, up the path, and knocked. Amos's widow opened the door, and, when she saw her husband's old enemy, gave a backward start.

"Riley bowed low, and taking from his buttonhole a flower, one such as he always wore, with an outstretched arm presented it to her, turned, and in silence walked away."

* * * *

At the Club I was winding up the last of my correspondence from Indianapolis. Tarkington entered the room, and when he saw me, dropped on a seat nearby. "Somebody it was," he said, "I can't remember who he was, who said something like, *all nature* works for the good of a few great men." Whether he was ironical, or humorous, or serious, I cannot say—there was nothing in his face to show.

* * * *

It is, as doubtless you know, bad luck to leave a city without dining at your last dinner there with a beautiful woman. And that, of course, explains my misadventure. I had, indeed, taken the precaution to arrange for such a dinner, but, at the last moment, the lady failed me.

I wound my watch the night before my departure very thoroughly. So thoroughly indeed did I wind it, that (though I had not noticed this in the morning when I arose) when, at about the time I felt I should be returning to my hotel to pack my bag, I looked at it, the thousand-times-confounded thing had ceased to go.

It was dramatic! A taxi whirl to my hotel. "What time do you go, Sir?" said the bell-boy, as we flung everything handy into my bag. "Twelve two," I sputtered; "strap it!"

"It's nearly that now, Sir," said the boy; "I don't think you can make it."

Make it? Dramatic? It was tragic!

You see, it was like this: I was not this time to ride (like Routledge) alone. No: I was to have the society, for something like seven hours, of an exceedingly good-looking and highly intelligent young woman. "The train", I declared, "will be a moment late. It *has* to be. Shoot!"...

"Three second ago," said the gateman; "next train for St. Louis a quarter to midnight."

Well (it took me several hours to come to the philosophic conclusion) perhaps it was better so. One can't tell what havoc might not be wrought in the mind by the society, for seven hours at a stretch, of such a young woman.

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JAPAN—REAL AND IMAGINARY

BY RAYMOND M. WEAVER

CONTRITE and rigorously controlled thinking is an activity that the human animal indulges only upon compulsion: Aristotle's malicious dictum that "all men desire to know" is too patent wit to be deplored as pathetic fallacy. Philosophy, which is but misery dissolved in thought, the intolerable concrete rendered abstract and vague; theology, which has treated the unknowable with such minute exactitude; history, which in its recent innovations has become proudly unreadable in its best attempts to be merely accurate: these bear elaborate witness to man's epicurean delight in comfortable absurdity. But despite the Pragmatists and the German Historians, man still draws his chief solace and dignity from myth. The audacity of science would sweep the sky of heavenly battlements and flaming angels, and the earth of El Dorado and the Hesperides. But man will not be cheated of his dreams. The eighteenth century, with all of its common sense, made Cathay synonymous with its romantic and irresponsible desires. But within the memory of living man, a fabulous island kingdom east even of Cathay, blazed from without its shadow on the world's rim and made a spectacular entrance into the comity of nations. Europe and America at once evinced an insatiable taste for the marvelous. The myth-making faculty settled avidly upon this last outpost of receding wonder, and gave local habitation to its wildest exercise in the name Japan.

With a resolute disregard of blatant fact that is one of the prime glories of the creative imagination—when not a devout betrayal of intellectual incompetence, — tourists, missionaries, celebrities on peregrination, novelists, and manufacturers of verse began fulminating on cherry-blossoms and the yellow peril. The business tact of the printer's devil abetted the spread of this profitable myth. For the edification of Occidental credulity, Japan was allowed an infallible rightness in all matters of art under the sun; the Japanese were made the *non plus ultra* of refinement of manners, of delicacy, of charm, of deportment. Stories became current of Japan's unique line of absolute monarchs: a line unbroken for over twenty-five hundred years, and conspicuously divine in its first ancestors. From the remotest ages, our gaping admiration has been assured, perfect concord has ever subsisted between beneficent sovereign and gratefully ruled subject. Never, we are informed, has Japan known the shame of treason, of rebellious acts, common in less perfect lands. The Japanese, so goes the authentic account, sharing in some degree the supernatural virtues of their rulers, have ever been distinguished by a high-minded chivalry called *Bushido*,

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unknown in inferior lands. As for the country itself, with its infinite variety of natural beauty, it has exhausted the vocabulary of guide-book superlatives. It is the "Land of Flowers"; it is the "Kingdom of the Gods".

Such, in outline, is the Japanese Myth: a myth that has established itself in popular English text-books, in current literature, and even in grave books of reference. Few Occidentals, it is true, take this myth with any worshipful seriousness: except to Japan's Pacific neighbors, Japan is of no more vital practical interest than is the Land of Cockaigne. If we learned tomorrow that Japan had over night sunk to the bottom of the sea, it is doubtful that many of us would eat a worse dinner for the news. The Japanese, it is true, take themselves a little more seriously. The ruling bureaucrats have found our indolent credulity both pleasing to native vanity and useful as a diplomatic engine; they have caught the habit of branding as "Anti-Japanese" any disquieting concern for "that complex, fragmentary, doubt-provoking knowledge which we call truth".

Converts to the Japan Myth will find little to offend against orthodoxy in "The Story of the Geisha Girl" by T. Fujimoto. "Japan is the country of *Bushido*—the country of Mount Fuji—the country of cherry-blossoms and at the same time must be said the country of *geisha* girls", is Mr. Fujimoto's ungrammatical enumeration of the verities. Mr. Fujimoto writes to correct the libelous ignorance of those who "misunderstand these girls to be equivalent to those in a lower kind of the female professions". Yet there are no austerities in Mr. Fujimoto's handling of these vestals of pleasure. Mr. Fujimoto's linguistic atrocities would inspire Olympian mirth in a country lawyer's parlor; though there are some who may view his cavalier contempt for the traditions of English speech as epic and upstart insolence. It is not a conspicuous tribute to Japanese intelligence that no foreigner of any other nationality would be permitted to expose himself in print on any supposedly serious topic with Mr. Fujimoto's swaggering linguistic incompetence. The book is sufficiently inconsequential in structure not to tax even the intelligence of a Daisy Ashford. There is a perfunctory historical introduction, followed by trivial and chaotic details of geisha-dom, spliced in among what purport to be *geisha* autobiographies. These autobiographies are in the luscious vein of Bertha M. Clay's "Wife in Name Only". "Though I despised men of base intentions, I was a young girl of passions," confesses one female Rousseau with a plurality of adventures in "holy love". The "holy love" of the maiden was not always without effect upon the census. "I loved him heartily," she remarks of a student she supported for four years, "and was so infatuated with him that at last I gave birth to a girl." There is a whimsically irrelevant closing chapter on "Double Suicide", and two appendixes. The first appendix gives samples of the words of geisha songs. These songs show none of the salacious innuendo of over-sophistication, but rather the chaste indecency of a primitive folk. One song begins: "Don't mind her innocence; she will soon arrive at puberty." The second appendix treats of the geographical distribution of *geisha* in the manner of the "Police Gazette". Not the least astonishing part of the volume is the index. A specimen is:

Assassin, 71, 75
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Bamboo blind, 136
Cake-box, 126
Callosity, 30
Canonicals, 124
Caterpillar, 91
Chambermaid, 11
Claws, 109
Crocodile tears, 133

The two pages of index read like a stately parody of the verse of T. S. Eliot. This volume as a whole is almost redeemed by the prodigal wealth of its sustained stupidities: it is a book to enamor the misanthropic of life.

Such volumes as this of Mr. Fujimoto work in the end to try the faith of even the most devout believers in the Japan Myth. But the impact of contemporary events—the Shantung decision of the Peace Conference, the revolution in Korea, the boycotts and unrest in China, the riots in Japan, and the disquieting conditions general throughout both the east and the west:—these are beginning to pain a growing minority with new ideas. We have been brow-beaten long enough, so says the congregation of heretics, with tales of the fabulous prettiness and unparalleled morality of things Japanese: tales compared with which Gilbert's "Mikado" seems a good, solid, sensible picture of Japan. Nor are these unsentimental doubters enemies to the peace of the world. In April, 1916, Mr. J. W. Robinson Scott said in the "Taiyo", the leading monthly magazine in Japan: "Experience of the last few years has shown that the best friends of Japan are not those who speak only smooth things of her. Those are her friends who tell her that Japan is at the parting of the ways." Japan, in her touchy and immoderate pretentiousness, is not eager to be told that in her imitation of western ways, she has mostly imitated the worst western things of our worst period: the inhuman commercialism of Birmingham; the inhuman militarism of Berlin.

In the recently published "Letters from China and Japan" of Professor and Mrs. John Dewey, it is the impression of Professor Dewey, surely one of the most illustrious of living thinkers: "On the whole, America ought to feel sorry for Japan, or at least sympathize with it, and not afraid. When we have so many problems it seems absurd to say they have more, but they certainly have fewer resources, material and human, in dealing with theirs than we have, and they have still to take almost the first step in dealing with many of them. It is very unfortunate for them that they have become a first-class power so rapidly and with so little preparation in many ways; it is a terrible task for them to live up to their position and reputation and they may crack under the strain." The woefully undeveloped commercial ability and industrial efficiency of the Japanese; the limits of their financial power; the Prussian hypocrisy of their despotic government, representative and parliamentary only in superficial outward visible form; the imperfect control which they exert over an industrialism which may yet sap in no small measure the vitality of the nation; the lessened degree to which religion and old codes of honor are controlling the social ferment: these are not myth, but aching reality. Baron Shibasawa, an illustrious financier, and one of the most universally respected of Japanese, in November, 1916, in an address after a banker's dinner in Tokyo, said: "I myself am inclined to regard Japan's future with pessimism. Not without great achievements in the field of material civilization during the Meiji era, the moral culture of the Japanese people was

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sadly neglected during those years." Such admissions are hardly usual from scions of the Sun-Goddess. But the west is beginning not to accept Japan on her widely-advertised airy and official evaluation. In the end, the most enduring weary of *Bushido* and cherry-blossoms. We have had enough of the Hearns—and the friends of Japan must wish an immediate annihilation of the Fujimoto ilk. There are cynics who would say that this last extermination would considerably lessen the problem of Japan's over-population. Japan is something more than a mood of style, a mannerism of art, an occasion for hysteria.

"Have We a Far Eastern Policy?", by General Charles H. Sherrill, while not emancipated from many of the established superstitions, still makes pious protestations of unbiased honesty, and on the basis of an insight gained during ten months spent around the shores and upon the islands of the Pacific, embarks upon an amiable journalistic attempt to cut the Gordian knot of Oriental politics. General Sherrill values Japan as "the bulwark of decent civilization against the Bolsheviki in Sibera and as a profitable friend and ally in the vast field of Asian markets". General Sherrill's book is not strangled in subtleties, not sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought. He is not one whit awed by the fable of Japanese inscrutability. "International politics are but external products of the internal development of a people," he says, and "cannot be properly understood by foreigners unwilling or unable to learn of that internal development which reveals itself in the nation's daily life." With jaunty willingness and no touch of misgiving as to his own ability, General Sherrill then proceeds to interpret the revelations of Japan's daily life.

Forty-three pages of "Leaves from a Note-Book" do not inspire a sublime confidence in General Sherrill's technique. Under the spell of the Myth, he says the trivial and hackneyed things about lanterns, and clogs, and Japanese umbrellas and the rest. The babies, in approved style, he finds "dainty little creatures, always neat and spotlessly clean". Mrs. Dewey evidently fell in among a lower lot of young ones. "The children up to the age of about thirteen appear never to wipe their noses," is Mrs. Dewey's report. Chapters on "Some Old Kyoto Gardens" and "Japanese Pilgrims" undertake prettily to exhibit the Japanese manifestations of "those two fundamentals which in any nation command its finest minds—religion and æsthetics". Chapters follow on the White Peril, the Yellow Peril, the Philippines, Japanese military and anti-American jingoes, China, Australia, and "Some Conclusions". The conclusions give with benevolent and enviable self-assurance "a Far Eastern Policy that is fair to all because it honestly takes into account the viewpoint of all concerned". We are counseled, with optimistic vagueness to study ourselves and our Pacific neighbors, and to balance our "inequalities with the same whole-souled interest in their satisfactory combination that the Japanese show in their arrangement of flowers"; to expect that the "Ladies' Agreement"—the withholding of passports from "picture-brides"—will solve the problem of immigration in California; to realize that to wet-nurse China is dangerous nonsense and bad business. General Sherrill's ten months in the east seem to have been insufficient to awaken him to an adequate sense of the in-

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tricacy of problems that with such bland simplicity he has undertaken to solve.

"Japan—Real and Imaginary", by Sydney Greenbie, is less audacious, but a far more solid and valuable work. Mr. Greenbie's book is an important contribution toward a temperate and unhysterical understanding of the average Japanese. Mr. Greenbie came to Japan after a wide traveling in the Pacific, to land upon the shores of the Flowery Isles with seventy-five cents in his pocket, with no letters of introduction to the mighty or the august,—and with the whole of the Japanese Empire at his feet to be taken and enjoyed. Much of Japan Mr. Greenbie did not see. His experiences were largely in Kobe where he earned his living as business-man, journalist, and teacher. He was graced with no interviews with the Emperor, nor was he lionized by prominent men; it is unfortunate for some of his conclusions on feminism in the east that he failed to know any of the best kind of Japanese women.

In so far as Mr. Greenbie keeps safely within the limits of his experience—and Mr. Greenbie is not prone to affect omniscience—his observations are painstaking and highly informing. Mr. Greenbie has too good sense to try to exhaust all possible discussion of Japan. His book is of conspicuous value for the shrewdly observed wealth of detail it gives of the everyday life of contemporary Japan. The faults of the book are patent enough. With so much matter, it is to be regretted there is not more perfect art. The book is made out of magazine articles: a mode of manufacture that has resulted in unprofitable repetition. And even within the separate articles it is Mr. Greenbie's temptation to be wordy. But despite these faults, Mr. Greenbie's book is to be imputed to him for righteousness. It is impossible to read "Japan—Real and Imaginary" without growing to the realization that the everyday Japanese, with a juster sense of his relative importance in the universe, might say with a truer humility than Petrarch in his "Letter to Posterity": "I am only a poor mortal like yourself". Mr. Greenbie has gone far in establishing the humiliating reality of the brotherhood of man.

"The Far East Unveiled" by Frederic Coleman, despite the title, which prepares one for something in the style of Mme. Blavatsky, is an unusually meaty and competent work. The sub-title, "An Inner History of Events in Japan and China in the Year 1916", gives a juster idea of the scope of the book. Mr. Coleman departs from the classical traditions of the academic historian who in his study rakes through dusty records of the past to build up sweeping generalizations on his meagre findings. Though Mr. Coleman writes with an extended familiarity with the east, he rigorously confines his work to the limited space of less than a year, and to the actual evidence of his eyes and ears. In Japan, China, Manchuria, and Korea Mr. Coleman interviewed all the notables and near-notables, and nobodies that promised game for his insatiable curiosity, the President of China and the Japanese and Chinese Prime Ministers being among his biggest game. He describes himself as

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The Geisha Girl. By T. Fujimoto. J. B. Lippincott Co.

Letters from China and Japan. By John Dewey and Alice Chapman Dewey. E. P. Dutton and Co.

Have We a Far Eastern Policy? By Charles H. Sherrill. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Japan—Real and Imaginary. By Sydney Greenbie. Harper and Bros.

The Far East Unveiled. By Frederic Coleman. Houghton Mifflin Co.

A History of the Japanese People. By Capt. F. Brinkley, with the collaboration of Baron Kikuchi. George H. Doran Company.

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being "merely a bland, always smiling, imperturbable, fat, certainly harmless man with a somewhat annoying penchant for asking foolish questions". Surely his was vastly illuminating and profitable folly. Mr. Coleman richly deserves the praise Montaigne bestowed on "the good Froissart, who tells us the diversities of humours which were current, and the different accounts that were told him. This is history naked and unadorned, and every one may profit from it according to the depth of his understanding". Perhaps there is malicious irony in the title of Mr. Coleman's book. "The Far East Unveiled" is of superlative importance for the light it throws on politics in the east and America's trade relations with the Orient. Mr. Coleman's book—with Captain Brinkley's "History of the Japanese People" about to be reissued—belongs to that small and distinguished company of first-rate books on Japan.

IN A FRIEND'S LIBRARY

(During Her Absence)

BY CHARLES HANSON TOWNE

ONE night I was alone in a friend's room,
Where the lamps shed their soft and steady glow,
And all around me, row on solemn row,
The words of Masters whispered in the gloom.
They spoke, as voices from a long-sealed tomb,
And as I dipped into some folio,
To read a page I had loved long ago,
Spirits came forth, their old life to resume.

O sacred hour with these most-treasured friends!
O moments of delight with this great host!
How much I loved each soft-returning ghost,
And the white peace that such an hour attends
But most I loved the silence. Nay, loved most
The thought of You!... Too soon my evening ends!

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FRANCIS BRETT YOUNG

BY COMPTON MACKENZIE

FRANCIS BRETT YOUNG may be called the most fortunate or the most unfortunate of the younger novelists: it depends on the point of view. If a general discussion of his chance in the great tontine of fame really help a novelist he must be esteemed unfortunate, for that chance has certainly not received anything like the attention it deserves from the recent accumulations of ephemeral criticism which now appear as regularly as new magazines. If, on the other hand—and I suspect that this opinion is more justifiable—it be really a handicap for an artist to find himself taken too seriously at the beginning of his career, then Mr. Brett Young must be counted the most fortunate. The present method of appraising authors has more affinity with racing gossip than with literature, and the climax is reached when the appraiser, not content with estimating contemporary values, indulges in speculations about the values of posterity that savor more of spiritualism than of criticism. I am sure that Mr. Brett Young has lost nothing because he has never been pictured drinking in Elysium, five hundred years hence, the distilled nectar of earthly fame, or even, to pass from the trivial to the significant, because Henry James did not include him in that famous article on the younger generation which set a few hearts beating and so many burning.

For one thing, such neglect has allowed Mr. Brett Young a free hand to experiment, and so interesting has been each one of these experiments, at any rate so far as his prose and verse are concerned—I cannot speak of his plays—that his varied production might serve as a text to illustrate the tendencies of our time.

Tendencies are as infectious as influenza; even with rigid isolation the subject is not immune, but he is safer thus than he would be by frequenting various literary groups, which are the worst disseminators of such infection. Mr. Brett Young, who was a doctor before he became a writer, probably learned in the exercise of his earlier profession the wisdom of avoiding infected areas unless compelled to visit them professionally. Literature has not summoned him professionally into such infected areas, and, with the exception of an excellent book on Robert Bridges, in which he gave a model diagnosis of a completely uninfectious patient, he has not been called upon to administer the consolations of criticism.

At the same time, one feels that Mr. Brett Young has indulged in a certain amount of research among the infectious tendencies of the present day; so much so, that occasionally he

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seems to have felt that it was his duty to inoculate himself, however mildly, with each serum in turn. The first tendency of this kind was toward a type of Welsh influenza which has remained endemic in the Marches, and which, under the influence of Mr. Arthur Machen, almost grew into a pandemic. The result was "Undergrowth", and it is interesting to notice that, like so many of the maladies of our early days, it ran through the household and infected his brother simultaneously, so that Francis Brett Young's first novel was really only half a first novel, the other half belonging to Eric Brett Young. The book is concerned with "old, unhappy far-off things" impinging upon the present, and you can get a better thrill from it than from any book of the same kind, always excepting "The Three Impostors". Incidentally it introduced a writer whose pen for landscape was evidently going to be one of the most accomplished of our time.

"Undergrowth" was followed by "Deep Sea", which is as different from "Undergrowth" as cheese from—in this case—Silurian. "Deep Sea" is a story of Brixham and Brixham trawlers, a simple and moving story, free from any hint of a tendency and achieving what, with much more elaboration of effort, the next book "The Dark Tower" fails to achieve,—the illumination of a minor tragedy by a privileged and sympathetic onlooker. The weakness of "Deep Sea" lies in what seems the author's lack of relish for the villainy; and this is a weakness which is noticeable right through his work. I do not think that any other living writer can evoke a sinister landscape at once so accurately and so alarmingly; but the sinister personalities in these landscapes sometimes turn out on approach to be scarecrows. This is not to deny that a scarecrow well placed can be as frightening as Charles Peace, if we keep our distance. The horrible requires at close quarters the naturalism of the Chamber of Horrors with its rows of glassy blue eyes and with its waxwork that simulates the human skin.

Perhaps Mr. Brett Young was conscious of this weakness, for in "The Dark Tower", the theme of which is essentially a sinister landscape, he experimented with some of the Conrad serum, in order to provide a human interest as suggestive, as complicated, and as provocatively obscure as his wonderful landscape. This is not the time to divagate into an examination of Mr. Conrad's method of narration, and I must take the risk of appearing superficial by saying that, roughly, this consists in viewing the dramatis personæ through a cloud of ordinary personalities that melts in a rain of inverted commas, above which can be heard the remote thunder of the tale and through which flashes the lightning of the author's revelation. Such a method, with all its pretense of "naturalism", is for me the least naturalistic that there is. I believe neither in Mr. Conrad's unending Marlowe nor in Mr. Brett Young's more finite Marsden: they are no more human than unresolved algebraical brackets. If the old Olympian method by which the novelist was allowed to know all about his puppets is no longer tolerable at our present pitch of literary refinement, it will at any rate never be ousted by this new contorted method, which is like craning at a football match from the middle of a crowd. Progress in art is a history of discarded conventions. Marlowes and Marsdens are only fresh conventions, clumsy or graceful according to one's

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taste; with the *deus ex machina*, the servants at the rise of the curtain, the messenger, the lonely horseman silhouetted against the last rays of the setting sun, the confidante, the soliloquy, the aside, and the transformation scene, they too will, in their day, pass to the property-room of art. But my intense dislike of oblique narrative has made me unjust to "The Dark Tower"; the tale often "walks in beauty like the night".

Mr. Brett Young's next book, "The Iron Age", begins with a very small injection of the Arnold Bennett serum, the effect of which is rapidly thrown off to show us more of Mr. Brett Young than any of the preceding books. There is again admirable scenery (that was to be expected); but there is now also visible a real ability to create human character, and though less pretentious in its psychology than "The Dark Tower", "The Iron Age" is more convincing. The fault of the book is an abrupt conclusion, brought about by the late war, at the very moment when Mr. Brett Young was in full swing with his theme. I am not such a fool, being a novelist myself, as to suppose that the war is not going to intrude upon the greater part of the novels written during the next twenty years. But Mars is not the only god emerging from a machine; the great war is not a finale like the general carnage of an Elizabethan tragedy, and it is to be hoped that novelists will remember the entrance of Fortinbras at the close of "Hamlet". The flow of normal life, be it damned never so violently, will gradually be restored.

Mr. Brett Young, having sent off his hero to the war, followed him immediately afterward, and was lucky enough (this can be said since he came safely home) to take part in the East African campaign. The result of this experience was "Marching on Tanga", which made a deep impression and brought his name into real prominence for the first time. Written under a stress of emotion and exaltation in a rhythmical prose that somewhat too frequently breaks into blank verse, it is a remarkable record of a remarkable experience, and it already beautifully fills in the immense library of war books a space which is assuredly a permanent one.

The experience gained in East Africa was now utilized less directly in "The Crescent Moon", which Mr. Brett Young in the dedication characterizes as a "shocker". He is unjust to himself, and this display of self-consciousness extends to imperil the whole story, for if Mr. Brett Young does not believe in his book, how shall he preserve the illusion that in so violent a story is more than ever essential? I cannot help feeling all the time that I am reading it that the author is looking over his shoulder a little apologetically and saying to some critic who during the war kept the divine fires burning at home: "I'm sorry I went away and had so much experience of blood and thunder; you will quite understand that I realize how shocking all this is, and I will try never to do it again." But why this apology? For the good or for the ill of our art some of us have been dragged through hell these last years, so that storms in teacups and the chess-problems of adultery are less attractive than formerly. "The Crescent Moon" requires no apology; I believe that it may be the apology which has once more taken the edge off Mr. Brett Young's villain.

But the effect of East Africa was not exhausted by "Marching on Tanga" or "The Crescent Moon". If

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the description of that emotion was in prose, the expression of it was in verse, and in "Five Degrees South", or more completely in "Poems, 1916-1918", Mr. Brett Young became definitely, even conspicuously, one of the "Georgian" poets, to use the muddle-headed jargon of the moment. There is a legend being sedulously spread that we live in a great age of poetry, propaganda for which is conducted unscrupulously enough by the poets themselves. Was it de Musset who said that his glass was not a large one, but that he did drink out of his own? The "Georgian" poets might add: "Our glass is not very large either, and we all drink out of it in turn, although some of us do possess small liqueur glasses of our own." I think that Mr. Brett Young has one of these liqueur glasses, and a very beautiful little glass it is, wrought by a cunning workman and brimming with a liqueur that was not bottled yesterday. In the latest volume of "Georgian" poetry there are several examples of Mr. Brett Young; and "Prothalamion", with its exquisite dying fall, might almost tempt one to suppose that we do live in a renascence of poetry, and that the four-and-twenty blackbirds who are baked weekly in the printer's pie of the literary press are really a dainty dish fit to set before a Georgian king. But alas, the king is indeed in his counting-house, for the war is over; the poets are being driven like the gods of Hellas to exercise their craft less divinely; the blackbirds have become mud-larks, and the mud that formerly produced the Lily of Malud is now being used for other purposes, medicinally, no doubt some would say; "but mud is none the less mud," as one of the group sings.

Mr. Brett Young escaped the void into which peace flung professional soldiers and poets. He got back immediately to his novels, and to such purpose that with "The Young Physician" he surpassed easily all his previous books. With the exception of the hurried end, obviously dictated by the economic tyranny of publishers (themselves the prey of other tyrannies), and of an attempt to give the book the kind of form it could have dispensed with by stretching probability in respect of the "villain's" reappearance, there is not much to say against "The Young Physician". The episode of the mother's death is as good as anything in contemporary literature; there are the usual beautiful landscapes, which are now inhabited by real people; finally, there is Mr. Brett Young as himself (I do not mean autobiographically) able and willing to affirm "our true intent is all for your delight".

I confess that I like a book to be readable; it seems to me that a capacity for entertaining a certain number of people is the chief justification for writing novels. It is a low-browed ambition, but I shall persevere in it myself, and I hope that Mr. Brett Young will persevere in it too. And here is "The Tragic Bride" to encourage such a hope. For a moment, in the first half-dozen pages, I thought that I was going to be disappointed. I expected to see that fellow Marsden round the next bend of the stream. But he was not fishing in Ireland that year, and presently I was enraptured by a hundred pages of Mr. Brett Young at his best, and how good that can be readers must find out. I should like to remove these hundred pages and print them as one of the best "short stories" in the English language, for though the rest of the book is good, it is not so good as the earlier part, and though my judgment is a

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sentimental one founded upon the intense pleasure the earlier part gave me, I do feel that in this case the sentimental judgment is supported by the æsthetic one.

Well, here is an end of my poor attempt to remind people that Mr. Brett Young is a novelist who has shown by his industry and steady progress, by his versatility and romantic outlook, by his technical accomplishment and by a kind of graceful modesty which is the very essence of his individuality as a writer, that he is worthy of much more attention than he has received. Yet I come back to my opinion that he is therein fortunate, because, withdrawn from the tribal wars that menace the health of the body æsthetic and unencumbered by the scalps of successful rivals, he is moving honorably toward that high place in the literature of the next decade for which he is marked out.

THE WIFE OF HONORE DE BALZAC

BY PRINCESS CATHERINE RADZIWILL

THERE was recently published in Paris a new volume of letters from Honoré de Balzac to the woman he married after a courtship of seventeen years. Madame de Balzac (known in French literature by that name of Etrangère which Viscount Spoelberch de Lovenjoul gave her when first he brought her correspondence with Balzac to the notice of the world) was in her way just as remarkable a personality as her renowned husband. She was, however, of such a modest disposition that she never during her lifetime allowed anyone to give her the praise which she deserved. After her death, most unfortunately for her memory, certain writers with more spite than talent tried to villify her, and to represent her as a cold, ambitious woman who had married Balzac entirely out of vanity. The truth is vastly different, and it is time to clear her memory from an imputation which has been strengthened by the spite of Victor Hugo. In a sketch far more imaginative than exact of the last moments of Balzac, Hugo attempted in a veiled, sarcastic manner to give to the public the idea that the great writer had died alone, while his wife remained in her own apartments. The truth is less romantic and far more human. When Hugo called on his dying friend, my aunt retired to her room for a few moments in order not to meet him. She did not like him, and she preferred not to encounter a man whom she knew to be antagonistic to herself at an hour when she was about to undergo the greatest trial in her life. As soon as the poet left the house, she resumed her place by the bedside of her husband and remained there until the last. And she paid him the greatest tribute of affection a woman could give to the man she had loved: she as-

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sumed the burden of his immense debts and, though not compelled to do so, paid them down to the last farthing. She remained upon the most affectionate terms with his mother and family,—it was thanks to her that Balzac's mother was able to spend in comfort her last years. These facts speak for themselves, and I think dispose better than volumes on the subject could of the conscious or unconscious calumny cast by Victor Hugo on my aunt's memory.

She was a remarkable personality, this famous Etrangère about whom so much has been written, and so little really known. She was truly, as Balzac once wrote to her, "one of those great minds preserved by solitude from the petty meannesses of this world". She loved solitude, moral as well as material; the best years of her life were spent by her alone, save for the affection of a few people who could appreciate and understand a character which perhaps had never bent, but which had always recognized the value of others, even when those others differed in opinions and thoughts. Her life was simple enough, in spite of the immense love and the wonderful romance that filled it. The daughter of a remarkable man who had enjoyed the friendship of most of the great writers of the eighteenth century, who had been a friend and a correspondent of Voltaire, she was brought up in the atmosphere of the eighteenth century with its touch of skepticism. The encyclopædia remained for her a kind of gospel, and the principles of the great French Revolution constantly inspired her, in spite of the fact that she was brought up in one of the haughtiest aristocratic circles in Europe, and in a country where the very mention of the words *liberty* and *freedom of opinion* was tabooed. She was eminently tolerant, a quality then perhaps more rarely to be met with than now. She respected the faiths and the convictions of others, and never condemned what she did not approve of. She hated hypocrisy, no matter in what shape or form it presented itself. This fact explains better than anything else the courage she displayed when, against the advice of her family and in spite of all obstacles, she carried through her determination to exchange her great position in Russia for that of wife of a novelist who was not then considered the great genius he has been proclaimed since his death.

Madame de Balzac was brought up almost entirely by her father, a man of great mind and charm, whose favorite she was. She was one of a large family of whom all the men were clever, handsome, and brave, and all the women beautiful, intelligent, and charming. At an early age she was married to a man much older than herself, whose immense fortune made him a conspicuous personage in the matrimonial market of his country. Monsieur Hanski (who by the way never had any right to the title of Count which is generally given to him, even by Balzac) was a man of unbalanced mind, subject to attacks of what we now call neurasthenia. This invalid shut up his young wife in the solitude of a magnificent country home where she had nothing to do but read, educate her children, and think over the miseries of a blighted existence. As long as her father lived, my aunt found in his affection a solace for her disappointments. When he died she was left, in the full sense of that word, alone,—alone to suffer, to love, and to struggle.

Of her five children, four died in infancy; one daughter remained, on

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whom she concentrated all her affection, and whose health was a subject of constant anxiety. It was an austere existence that she led in her lonely Ukrainian castle; and it is no wonder that she caught at the idea of entering through the medium of a newspaper into a correspondence with Balzac, whose early works she had read. Her first letter to him, signed "Une Etrangère", impressed him so much that he replied; this was the beginning of the long "love romance"—as he called it in one of his letters to Madame Zulma Carraud—which ended only with his life. The correspondents met at last at Neuchâtel in Switzerland, where began in earnest the affection which was to remain the leitmotif in my aunt's subsequent life.

Upon the death of Monsieur Hanski, his widow succeeded to his great fortune. Instead of remarrying immediately, however, she waited until the marriage of her daughter, to whom she gave up this wealth, reserving for herself only an annuity. Then, though she knew Balzac to be ill beyond the hope of recovery, she did not hesitate for a moment in pledging herself to him. My father, Madame de Balzac's favorite brother, related to me how he tried to dissuade her from taking this step which meant a quasi exile from her native land. He could not shake her resolution, and her reply was so essentially characteristic that I quote it here: "It would be unworthy of me if I were of so contemptible a turn of mind as to put my own happiness or comfort before the possibility of soothing the last hours of the man whose heart has been in my keeping for seventeen years." Balzac's marriage was, as he expressed it himself, the great and supreme triumph of his life. Six months after it had taken place, he died in Paris, whither he had brought his wife,—died happy in spite of all that has been told or written to the contrary. My aunt closed his eyes with pious hands; her heart was broken and, as she told me once, "J'ai vécu un enfer de souffrance ce jour là." (I lived through a hell of suffering on that day.)

Madame de Balzac remained in Paris after her husband's death. Her first act was to pay his debts, which she did with that care and thoroughness she always brought to bear on everything she undertook. She remained in the little house in the rue Beaujen, afterward rue Balzac, which the great writer had bought for her; there her daughter and son-in-law joined her, after which existence for her settled in a grave but contented channel. Gradually all the intelligent and remarkable men (of whom there were so many in the Paris of that time) found a meeting-place in the long and narrow room, low of ceiling, with its large fireplace at one end, and a table with the colossal bust of Balzac by David D'Angers at the other. By the middle window of the three which lighted the apartment, my aunt would sit beside a small working-table, generally knitting, and from time to time putting in a remark which immediately gave a new turn to the conversation. She possessed in a rare degree the art of listening, and that of bringing forward the best points in other people's discourses. To any question put to her, or any fact submitted to her judgment, she had an immediate reply, which brought an illuminating light into the discussion. Her comments on men and events were sometimes severe but never hard; she exhibited always that great serenity which was one of her most wonderful traits; her intelligence was constantly

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applied to the task of looking for the best, never for the worst side of human nature.

One evening the conversation turned on the facility with which people destroy their neighbors' happiness by idle words or ill-natured remarks. My aunt lifted her head from her everlasting knitting. "I think," she gravely said, "that this proceeds from a vice in our system of education. Children ought to be brought up to respect other people's happiness just as they are reared in the respect of religion; they ought to be taught to reverence it as something holy if not entirely divine." This was one of many illuminating remarks which constantly escaped her. Madame de Balzac, though what the world would perhaps call an atheist, was in reality one of the greatest believers it has ever been my fortune to meet. In one of her letters to my mother she says:

> You will know one day, my dear little sister, that what one cares the most to read over again in the book of life, are those difficult pages of the past, when after a hard struggle duty has remained the master of the battlefield. It has buried its dead, and brushed aside all the remains that were left of them; and God in His infinite mercy allows flowers and grasses to grow again on this bloody ground. Don't think that by these flowers I mean to say that one forgets. No, on the contrary, I am thinking of remembrance: the remembrance of the victory that has been won, after so many sacrifices; I am thinking of all these voices of the conscience which come to soothe us and to tell us that our Father in Heaven is satisfied with what we have done.

The hôtel Balzac, as it was called, was for many years one of the most important centres of Parisian society. There one could meet statesmen like Thiers and Guizot (it was, by the way, the only house where they ever condescended to meet after politics had divided them in an irreconcilable manner); historians and thinkers like Taine and Renan; art critics like Charles Blanc, painters like Gigoux, Carolus Duran at the beginning of his fame, and Gudin; authors like Sainte-Beuve, and Paul Lacroix or the Bibliophile Jacob as he was called; great ladies belonging to the aristocracy of the whole of Europe; politicians of all parties; philosophers like the famous Abbé Constant (known in occult circles by his pseudonym of Eliphas Lévy); sometimes even a priest like Lacordaire, or a musician like Gounod, and a sprinkling of lovely women to lend to this eclectic picture the help of their beauty and of their grace. Nowhere in Paris did people of more opposed opinions condescend to meet, and to be friendly with one another; nowhere did more animated discussions take place without ever degenerating into quarrels.

My aunt, though essentially the type of a grande dame of the old régime, was nevertheless an ardent liberal by conviction. Her early education, and later on Balzac's influence, would have inclined her to sympathize with the legitimists or monarchists, had not her sound common sense absolutely recoiled. She refused to accept the creed of intolerance professed by many of those who were dear to her; she hated Napoleon III and the whole Bonapartist program. Long before the disasters of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, she had taken the standard of the Emperor and of his government. But after the fall of the Empire, she refrained from throwing stones at the man whose omnipotence she had always disputed.

Thiers was her particular friend. One of my earliest recollections (in 1869, just before the cataclysm which was to culminate in the catastrophe of Sedan) is that of a short, active little man with spectacles, and an unmistakable southern accent, sitting on one side of the open fireplace, while oppo-

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site him reclined in a wide armchair a tall, lean figure with stern features. They were engaged in animated conversation, and as my governness led me—a child of six or seven—into the room, my aunt made a sign to me to come near her. Drawing me closer to her, she whispered in my ear: "Remember these two men, my child; the short one is Thiers, and the other is Monsieur Guizot. Perhaps later on you will be proud to have seen them." This friendship of Madame de Balzac for the first President of the third French republic lasted until the latter's death. He admired her for her virile mind, and for the fearlessness with which she often disagreed with him. He liked to tease her about her "aristocratic prejudices", and took malicious pleasure in recalling the following incident. During the Commune a detachment of "Fédérés" invaded the hôtel Balzac. My aunt, then past seventy, immensely stout, and crippled by gout, faced them sitting in her usual armchair. Her servants had fled in terror; she was alone with her daughter. The officer in command of the company of soldiers who had forced themselves into her presence, addressed her as "Citoyenne". My aunt looked at him quite unconcernedly, and said in the most matter-of-fact voice: "First of all take off your hat; I am not used to men coming into my room without uncovering their heads. And then don't call me 'Citoyenne' but 'Madame',—I am too old to be addressed in such a familiar manner." The man was so cowed by this impassible courage that he immediately removed his cap, excused himself, then left the house without having molested its inhabitants.

I think that of all my aunt's visitors and friends, the one whom she liked and whom she certainly respected the most, was Renan. They were in complete sympathy with each other mentally, and both were intensely religious. Few people have understood so fully as did Renan the beauties of the morality preached by Christ, and few people have had more reverence for the sacred individuality of the Savior of mankind. Renan tried to imitate Christ in all the actions of his life, to be, like Him, kind and indulgent and compassionate toward the woes of the world. This creed created a link, and a strong one, between him and Madame de Balzac, who like him possessed a very clear insight into religious matters and the faculty of setting aside superstition while retaining the poetry that attaches to the teachings of the different churches. Both of them sought truth always; but they never gave out their own ideas as perfect ones or tried to impose them on others. I remember a discussion on religious tolerance in general between a distant relative of my aunt, the Princess Hedwige de Ligne, who was considered a power in the faubourg St. Germain, and a few men whose opinions were entirely different from hers. Renan was consulted and asked to say what he thought about the theory of heaven and hell. He smiled the sad little smile which appealed so much to those who understood all that it contained of indulgence and kindness, and quietly replied: "I think that God is far too just to punish with an eternity of torment, the sins committed during such a short period as the longest of human lives." The Princess was not satisfied, and continued amplifying her subject. "After all, Monsieur Renan", she exclaimed, "I would really like to know whether you absolutely refuse to believe in the divinity of Christ." At this moment Madame de Balzac, who

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had followed the discussion with keen interest, turned to her niece with the remark that she regretted that people "should always harp upon the divinity of our Lord, because after all his sacrifice, supposing it had been made by a man for the good of mankind, would have been far greater than if accomplished by a god aware of the results it was bound to have. The uncertainty as to its usefulness must have been the most awful part of the torments Christ had to endure, and it would most certainly have added to his greatness had he only been a child of God." The remark at once put an end to the discussion.

Mention of Renan reminds me of an amusing story connected with him, the kindest and most obliging of men. One evening after dinner, a small circle of people were gathered around my aunt's armchair. The Comtesse de Montalembert, widow of the great Catholic writer, with whom my aunt was distantly connected, happened to call. She had never seen Renan and, not for one moment supposing he could be there, failed to notice his name when he was presented to her. The evening was a rainy one. When the Countess was about to go home, she discovered that she had forgotten to take her umbrella and had sent away her carriage. Renan, always amiable, offered to accompany her and to give her the shelter of his huge and anything but elegant cotton umbrella. The Countess accepted the offer and parted upon excellent terms with her escort. A few days later she was asked by one of her friends, who had watched the incident with considerable amusement, whether she knew who had been her companion on that night. When she heard that she had actually walked side by side with the author of "The Life of Jesus"—which had so profoundly shocked the Catholic world—she immediately rushed to her confessor to ask absolution for this heinous crime. She never again set foot in my aunt's house.

Hippolyte Taine, the great historian, used also from time to time when he happened to be in Paris to cross the hospitable doors of the hôtel Balzac. My aunt admired him exceedingly, though she did not quite sympathize with all his views. She was above everything else an ardent French patriot, who never would admit her country could be wrong. Taine on the contrary professed the opinion that patriotism ought not to interfere with the condemnation of what was wrong in one's own land and in one's own people. I remember his saying once: "It is a poor kind of patriotism which imagines that one must excuse the crimes of one's own country, simply because one is a citizen of it." This my aunt would not admit, especially not as a public confession. She held the opinion that one's country ought to be considered as a mother with whom fault must never be found.

One of the most curious personalities among the many remarkable ones to be found at the hôtel Balzac, was undoubtedly the famous Abbé Constant, better known under his nom de plume of Eliphas Lévy, and one of the greatest authorities in the world on all matters relating to occultism. He used to dine with my aunt every Wednesday, and was treated with great respect by all who met him there. The fact of his being a priest who had left Holy Orders and taken a wife, made him an object of abomination to all pious Catholics; but among the circle of deep thinkers who were in the habit of consulting him in regard to their religious doubts, he was a personage of immense importance. No one, see-

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ing him seated next to my aunt, would have suspected him of practising black magic. His venerable countenance, his flowing white beard reaching to the chest, reminded one of the patriarchs of old, rather than of an evocator of the Evil One, with whom he was suspected of holding intercourse at times. He was credited with being able to foretell the future of those people brave enough to ask him to do so. I must confess that once or twice he divined, in an uncanny way, what was going to happen to some of his friends. But he was kindness itself, and his serenity was equaled only by that of my aunt, surpassing even sometimes that of Renan, with whom he was on terms of sincere friendship. The Abbé Constant had sprung into notoriety upon the murder of the Archbishop of Paris, Monseigneur Sibour. When the prelate's assassin was brought to trial, he exclaimed that this disaster would not have happened had he listened to Eliphas Lévy. Police inquiries established the fact that the man had consulted Lévy a few days before the murder, when the seer warned him to leave Paris immediately because he was about to commit a terrible deed which would result in his own death. After this the Abbé Constant, as he was still called, became quite a Parisian celebrity—a fact which did not contribute in the least to his happiness.

All these things happened very long ago; not one of the brilliant and famous people who used to assemble at the hôtel Balzac is now left in this world. The house where I saw them and listened to them has been pulled down, and in its place has been erected the sumptuous dwelling of the Baroness de Rothschild. My aunt's Russian home, with its many remembrances of Balzac, has been destroyed by the Bolsheviks. Madame de Balzac herself died under particularly painful circumstances, after witnessing the squandering of her large fortune by her daughter, who possessed none of her great gifts of heart or of mind. At the news of this disaster my aunt bowed her head upon her chest, and never raised it again. But her wonderful mind remained bright and unimpaired until the end. On Easter Day, 1882, a few hours before her death, she was asked whether she would like to see a priest. She replied simply that if he wished to pray for her she would feel grateful; but that she could not lie to the God she believed in nor lend herself to a comedy which would dishonor her last hours, by submitting to the rites of a religion she no longer pretended to profess. Her last words were "Anna", her daughter's name, and "Honoré", which had been her husband's: the names of the one love and the only tenderness her life had known. Upon hearing of her death, Renan exclaimed that in her "one of the great lights of the world had gone out".

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ON BEING AN ESSAYIST

BY BERTON BRALEY

LAMENTING for lost arts is, and ever has been, one of the favorite indoor sports of those choice souls—self-chosen—who hold literature "a precious, precious thing" and deplore any tendency on its part to play with the rough, common boys of Popularity and Commercialism. Next to falling for everything misty and mystic and bizarre which heralds itself as "new art", holding obsequies over a "lost" one is probably the most popular amusement of this little group of serious thinkers.

Unquestionably the cadaver over which they lament most regularly is the "lost art of the essay". Every gathering of the elect becomes automatically a funeral for this form of literary expression, the mourners begin wailing as soon as three or four of them have coalesced, and when the wake gets into full swing the very tea they drink is salt with their tears. If there isn't any corpse present they send out for one, dress it in the garments of Lamb, Addison, Emerson, and Stevenson, and pass about the bier waggling their heads sadly and saying, "Doesn't he look unnatural".

It makes no difference if the corpse sits up and becomes paradoxically articulate in the voice of Chesterton; or whimsically genial in the tone of Marquis, or proudly young-paternal in the manner of Morley; the brotherhood and sisterhood of wailers wail on, the service for the dead is intoned, and the interment takes place as scheduled, with wax flowers and wired wreaths. Then back from the cemetery in the limousine with the job well accomplished, while the "remains" climbs out, dusts itself off, and discusses politics and the high cost of living with the sexton.

Nothing is more amazing than the persistence of a reiterated falsehood. And nothing is more durable than a tradition which is constantly asserted. "The essay is dead, is dead, is dead", cry the professional and volunteer mourners, and so the great bulk of us who meet the essay in the daily paper, in the weekly magazine, in the popular monthly, in advertising pages, on cards in the stationer's shop, and heaped high on the best-seller counter of the bookstores—repeat automatically "the essay is dead, is dead, is dead", even while we dine and play Kelly pool with the men who are keeping it most emphatically alive.

For you can get away with almost any statement if you don't argue about it or defend it, but proclaim it doughtily and consistently to all and several with the ring of authority in your voice. And to attain that authoritative ring you merely need to assert something, anything, with sufficient doughtiness and consistency. So it is

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a beautiful circle which anyone who doesn't care about facts can easily run around in.

Of course the basis for this tradition of the essay's defunctitude is the Little Lord Fauntleroy complex with which many critics and a certain self-constituted group, heretofore and hereinafter named the elect, are affected. As I hinted a little earlier, these folk regard literature as a "precious, precious thing"—a good deal as many mothers in the Little Lord Fauntleroy era regarded their male offspring as Cedric Errols who must by no means scrub around with the rough little boys in the neighborhood, but must keep their velvet pants unmuddied, and their golden locks virgin to the shears. The Fauntleroy complex holds literature as a delicately exclusive snob which can endure association only with a strictly selected number of other snobs, and as soon as this Cedric Errol of culture shows tendencies toward romping around and getting all mussed up with the butcher's boy and the rest of the crowd in Dugan's back lot, the Fauntleroy neurosis declares him not of gentle blood, casts him out to scrub through as best he may, and refuses to let the nice little boys and girls play with him.

And it is always and inevitably with pained surprise that the Fauntleroyites note that his subsequent career leads him not to a foundling's home, but to an apartment on Riverside Drive and a summer shack in Maine.

I am willing to wager that the Fauntleroyites of Shakespeare's time regarded his work as commercialized pandering to the mob, and prophesied that such perniciously popular stuff would perish miserably with the man who fathered it. There is no more ageless tradition than that literature is for the few and not for the many, and this in the face of the fact that with scant exceptions most great and enduring work has been successful in its own time.

This Fauntleroy complex looks upon the essay as a sacrosanct possession of Lamb, Addison, and a few others who are dead. Therefore it regards the essay as dead. In other words, if it isn't Lamb it isn't an essay. Which is logical enough if you accept the premise. Most arguments in the world are logical if you accept the premise. If people could wholly agree on premises to begin with, there wouldn't be divorces or world wars. But I have no use for that particular premise. I don't think I could define an essay—but I see no reason why anybody should be afraid to write one, if he has anything to say worth essaying.

I can already hear the chorus of well-bred scorn which will follow my statement—assuming that the elect aren't too scornful to read it—that Dr. Frank Crane is in some ways a better essayist than Ralph Waldo Emerson, and that the writing of glorified common sense in a vital and trenchant fashion is literature. To sneer at the obvious is easy enough, to answer it is something else again. And nowadays, when propaganda which ignores or denies the obvious is leading allwhither and nowhere at all, platitudes driven home by a hammer in the hands of a vigorous and skilful literary craftsman are emphatically desirable. With hundreds of so-called thinkers pulling bolts and nails out of the structure of society and hopefully tying the timbers together with pink string, the need for efficient carpenters grows.

However, that is a digression. What I wanted to prove is that the essay is not dead. If you take the particular style of a particular man and maintain, "Thus gods are made

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and whoso makes them otherwise shall die", then every form of art dies with the man who first practises it. On such an assumption the novel died with Richardson, the play with the first maker of drama, the essay with the first commentator. But I cannot bring myself to narrow down any form of art to such limits as that. And I hold that the essay, therefore, is very far from dead. Alas, the elect sigh, why does no one write like Lamb? A lot of people do write like Lamb,—so much the worse for their work. Not because Lamb wasn't a delightful essayist, but because a writer ought to express himself and not somebody else.

So I maintain that the essay is a live art while there are those alive who practise it, and that nobody need be for a moment deterred from writing essays because the shadow of Lamb or Addison hangs over this craft. And whether the essays be about books or vacuum cleaners, art or artichokes, they have a reason for being if people like them well enough to read them, or read them well enough to like them.

But if I should write essays—which I'm likely to do any time—I should feel that I had done a very bad job if they were the sort that appealed only to the elect. Deliver me from the Fauntleroy complex and let whatever I produce at least be the type of literary offspring that comes back to the house a little late for dinner, tousled, smudged, a bit breathless, shouting, "Oh, pop, I've been playing with the bunch in Dugan's back lot and I've had a perfectly gorgeous time!"

ON HUMOR IN LITERATURE

BY C. S. EVANS

SOME time ago a well-known firm of publishers offered a prize for the best humorous novel. Such enterprise deserves to be rewarded and I hope they got what they wanted. At the present time the world needs a really humorous novel very badly, and there is a fortune waiting for the person who can make it forget its troubles in a hearty laugh.

But what exactly is the definition of a humorous novel? Would that term be applied, for instance, to "Martin Chuzzlewit" or "The Old Curiosity Shop"? Both of these books make one laugh very much, in parts, but in others they are the blackest tragedy. Is "Huckleberry Finn" a humorous book, or is it an epic? Is Jerome's "Three Men in a Boat", which has made hundreds of thousands of people hold their sides, "humorous", or merely "funny" (for there is a difference between the two)? In short, what is humor, and what is its relation to literature?

Having thus complacently propounded a riddle, I suppose I must try to answer it, but this is by no means easy. To deal with such a sub-

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ject satisfactorily one must delve deep into human nature and answer a score of fundamental questions. Why, for instance, do we laugh when we are amused; and why is it that some things amuse us and not others? Such questions as these have aroused the curiosity of scientists and philosophers. Darwin tried to answer them, and told us that the feeling of pleasurable exhilaration which causes us to laugh had its origin in a strictly utilitarian function. When we were fishes, ten million years ago or thereabouts, we pursued our prey with open mouths. To eat was the greatest pleasure, with which all other pleasures became in time associated; hence the expression of physiological satisfaction by the muscles of the mouth. Kissing, according to this school of philosophy, originated in much the same way: the mother who kisses her baby is expressing a primæval feeling —the baby is so nice that she would like to eat it. Could anything be simpler!

Bergson and William James and Sully, all of them considerable psychologists, have investigated the meaning of laughter, the first in one of the most brilliant (and least convincing) psychological essays ever written. His argument is too long and too complex even to outline here, but one may sum it up by saying that, in Bergson's view, laughter is a social gesture instinctively called into play to repress that mechanical inelasticity which is life's negation. Deformities are comic in proportion as they can be imitated by any normal person; attitudes and movements call forth laughter in so far as they remind us of a mere machine. We laugh every time a person gives us the impression of being a thing. A red nose is a painted nose to the imagination; a negro a white man unwashed. Laughter is purely corrective in function, and we never laugh except at the failings or deficiencies of others.

To anybody who wishes to pursue this subject, I recommend the careful study, one after the other, of Bergson's essay on "Laughter" and Meredith's essay on "The Uses of the Comic Spirit". These books will not help an aspirant to win a publisher's prize, but they will at least show how extraordinarily complex is the whole subject, and how difficult it is to explain the appeal of so-called "humorous" or comic situations.

Meanwhile, it is interesting to reflect that there is undoubtedly some remote connection between the risible faculty and the emotion of fear. Why does a child laugh when you tickle it in the ribs, or in the neck, or under the arms? Everybody will testify that in laughter so provoked there is considerable apprehension, and in my view this is due to the fact that pressure applied in these places threatens injury to a vital organ. The so-called ticklish regions of the body are those where the big arteries approach the surface, as for instance in the neck or axilla, or those covering the heart and lungs. Laughter in this case is a physiological expression, not of fear, but of a much more complex emotion in which fear and a certain relief that fear is unjustified play a part.

There are certain things and certain actions, even certain words, which seem almost intrinsically funny. Every comedian knows that he has only to mention the word *sausage*, even in the most solemn of connections, to provoke shrieks of merriment. A red nose, also, is an intrinsically funny thing, and if a red-nosed man should be discovered eating a sausage that would be the very height

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of the laughable. A study of music-hall humor would lead one to suppose, also, that there is something inherently funny in the idea of (a) a mother-in-law, (b) a kipper, (c) strong-smelling cheese, and (d) a man or woman under the influence of drink. Is it too unwarrantable an assumption that a considerable though vague feeling of apprehension is at the bottom of the emotion in each case?

No one who proposes to investigate the meaning and function of laughter can afford to neglect the manifestation of the faculty in children and other primitive beings. It was once my privilege to talk to a well-known pantomime comedian just before he was going on, and I asked him what his part was. "Oh", said he, "it's very simple. I just put on a little hat and big boots, walk on, fall over my feet, and come off again." A minute later he went and did it, and, judging by the screams of laughter which echoed around the hall, he did it with great effect.

Now there is nothing funny in falling down; on the contrary, to the person who falls at least, it may be an exceedingly painful experience. But the professional comedian knows that a fall is an infallible laugh-getter. Failing a fall, he may sit on a gentleman's top-hat, or inveigle a victim into sitting down on a chair that isn't there. But enough of such instances. It is sufficient to remark that nothing less than a profound psychology inspires the performance of the clown in the harlequinade, when he steals a monstrous string of sausages from the Pantaloon's basket, and burns the policeman with the end of a red-hot poker.

There are, of course, degrees of subtlety in humor, and probably the next grade in order of complexity is the humor which is based upon the idea of confusion. The greatest exponent of this form of humor was the late Dan Leno. Many people will have joyous memories of his exploits with a harp at the Drury Lane Pantomime some years ago. He had a harp, and a music-stool, and a music-stand. Encumbered with the harp, he placed the stool and the stand in position, and then sat down to play. But the stand was too far away, and in getting up to adjust it he fell over the stool. While he was picking the stool up the stand fell onto his head, and so the merry game went on, for at least twenty minutes, until he finished up with the harp round his neck while the audience held their sides. Told thus coldly, there is nothing funny in the incident, but it was excruciatingly funny to watch. This "humor of confusion" and the elemental kind of humor first mentioned have their counterpart in literature in the exploits of Lever's Handy Andy, and in those two books, once so exceedingly popular but now long forgotten, "Valentine Vox the Ventriloquist", and "Sylvester Sound the Somnambulist". Anyone can test its efficacy for himself by giving a child "A Bad Boy's Diary". These four books and many others of a similar nature, were put forward ostensibly as "humorous" books, and they perfectly justified their name. Jerome K. Jerome's "Three Men in a Boat", and even H. G. Wells's "Bealby" are, though much more adequate from the point of view of art, really exercises in the same genre.

The fact that emerges is, that the book which deliberately sets out to be humorous or, in other words, to get a laugh, usually succeeds in so far as it makes its appeal to the fundamental and primitive elements of humor

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which I have noted. Such books usually make one laugh uproariously or they do not amuse one at all. A case in point is Ellis Parker Butler's story called "Pigs is Pigs", which was published some years ago. I always thought that story the funniest thing in literature, but I have known people who could read it without a smile. The humor of it, however, is elemental; it tickles the foundations of one's nature. It is "comic" rather than humorous.

For by "humor" in literature we have come to mean not the clumsy digging at the ribs which provokes an outburst of uncontrollable laughter, but the kindlier, subtler pleasure which arises from skilful observation or caricature. In this sense "Don Quixote" is a humorous novel, and so are most of Dickens's books and Thackeray's "The Yellowplush Papers" and "The Book of Snobs", though the last is perhaps better described as humorous satire. The great masterpiece of the world's literature in this form of art is, of course, the great work of Rabelais. Gargantua, Pantagruel, and the rest are humorous figures conceived by a surpassing genius, and in our own literature they are equaled only by the colossal figure of Falstaff. Few episodes in such masterpieces as these provoke the actual laugh, but they produce the internal purr of pleased content which is the sign of supreme satisfaction.

And how few are these consummate creations of the humorist's art! You may count the masterpieces of humor on the fingers of one hand. "Don Quixote", Rabelais, "Pickwick Papers", those wonderful scenes from "Henry VI", Sterne's "A Sentimental Journey" and "Tristram Shandy"—what else is there to compare with these? Very near to them I should be inclined to place Mark Twain's "Tom Sawyer" and "Huckleberry Finn", and especially the latter, which is no mere masterpiece of humor but a masterpiece of the world's literature. Compare the supreme art of it with the manufactured funniosity of "The Innocents Abroad" or the works of Max Adeler. On the lower plane of humor you get a laugh by the most unimaginative means—merely conceive a recognized humorous situation, or bring several things together according to a recipe, and the thing is done. Every practised comedian, in literature or on the stage, is an adept at it. But the creation of character, the expression—in terms of the words and actions of men and women—of that "social gesture" which is laughter's source, is a much greater thing, for there we touch the symbolism which is the soul of art.

I had meant, when I began this paper, to pass in review the work of a few of our professed literary humorists, and to examine the elements of their varied appeal to the risible faculties, but to do that properly I should have to write a book which probably nobody would buy. Yet it would be a very interesting study, and I think it might possibly throw some light on a department of criticism that so far has been little explored. One could place W. W. Jacobs, for instance, very close to the immortals, and state the reasons for so doing. One would also explain why Mr. Jacobs is condemned to go about like a modern Sindbad, carrying on his shoulders a night watchman who at each step grows more ponderous. "Saki" (who created that memorable otter which, kept in a tank in the garden, whined restlessly every time the water-rate became overdue) should be classified at the end of the division which had Thackeray at the head, because of his savage and

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cynical satire, while Samuel Butler should have a place all to himself. Then there are Stephen Leacock, and O. Henry, and Frank Richardson,—who in a flash of brilliant genius saw the intrinsic humor of whiskers, and materialized it for ever in the phrase, "face fungus",—and Max Adeler and Artemus Ward and the other popular humorists of America. Like a procession of comedians, they walk through the halls of memory, each in his appropriate makeup, with big feet or red nose, or incredible whiskers.

And above and beyond, brooding with an awful melancholy, are the three or four great humorous artists of the world, Cervantes and Molière and Shakespeare, and the apostate monk of Touraine.

CURRENT TASTE IN FICTION: A QUARTERLY SURVEY

BY JOHN WALCOTT

I WAS saying the other day that we should be able to talk more sensibly about current taste in fiction if we had any real way of classifying book buyers and borrowers by quality as well as by numbers. And this isn't mere "academic" curiosity, for any reasonable person might be interested to know not merely what relation novel-reading has to the prosperity of publishers or the labors of librarians, but what relation it has to the pleasure and profit of the nation as a whole. We need, for instance, some formula, however vague, to give their due importance to the more intelligent minority who read actively, as against the less intelligent majority who read passively. It isn't a case altogether of highbrow and lowbrow, either; for we have thousands of readers who are earnest enough in their ignorance, and in default of education and its standards simply can't find or recognize the good stuff they hanker for. They chew their thistles with pathetic fidelity, and try their best to make them taste like figs. And we have, on the other hand, hundreds if not thousands of well-meaning and more or less educated people who dutifully masticate the alleged figs certified by "the best authorities", without being able to assimilate any nourishment from them whatever. It is all very complex and baffling for the modest investigator.

One thing of which the American novel-reading public (in the lump) has been frequently accused, especially by foreign observers, is that it is predominantly female. Our novelists (so the charge runs) have fallen under the thumb of the sentimental fair on the one hand, and the aggressive women's-clubbers on the other. And so between the devil of squashy romance on the one hand and the deep sea of feministic document on the other, the novelist's robust male sense, common or uncommon, has feebly withdrawn into the background, murmuring compliments. Between the

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Ladies' Home Journalists and the Women's Federationists and the Greenwich Villagers, what could a poor man do? The pathos of the picture is slightly modified by the fact that the poor man has for some time been largely if not mostly a woman himself. But the main question is whether our fiction has really been feminized. The allegation goes on to specify that this portent is a sign of the general feminization of our culture and our society.

Now I incline to take a more hopeful view of this situation. I think there was getting to be a good deal of truth in the charge before the war, and I see that, in our period of reaction, there seems to be hardly less truth in it now. But I believe the tendency is actually decreasing, not increasing. Short of madness, I must believe that.

But I can't pretend to derive this belief from the behavior of the majority. After all, the war was rough on the majority: let me not cause its head to be bowed in shame! Let me mention as a venial foible or natural and momentary symptom that the majority shows just now a marked tendency to relax into the easy arms of sentimental romance. While the publishers are dutifully beckoning us to their solid wares, in which American life, they say, is being more searchingly portrayed than ever before, the majority finds its account elsewhere. It passes on to the counters where the broncos rear and the lovely maiden hangs by a finger from the edge of the precipice; or to the stack where So-and-so toweringly repeats himself about the childlike eccentric hero and the rich damsel whose privilege it is to adore him; or even beyond, to the shelves where old-fashioned heroines peep out at us from under lilac sunbonnets and the dialogue is mostly cribbed from the language of flowers. If our wives and our daughters are now fated to be almost totally visible on sandy beach and dancing-floor, refuge for them and us remains in the memory of the maiden whose nature it was to blush when, in a careless moment, her instep endured exposure upon the rose-walk of her father's formal garden.

But if the old-fashioned girl has never ceased to be a refuge and a delight, it is nevertheless true that the normal or average heroine, even in romance, is now pretty thoroughly modernized. It is not only her cigarette and her camaraderie, her frank speech and vaunted ability to "take care of herself" that mark her off from her mother and her aunts. Her very physique is up-to-date. And it is a whimsical or ominous fact, as you choose to take it, that the finest thing you can say for her is to pronounce her "more like some slim boy".... She has no hips and as little chest as possible; and as the hero views her outlined against the sky with the sea-breeze blowing back her skirts and so on, the thing that chiefly thrills him, by all accounts, is that she has no particular form to outline. I really wonder if this does the hero justice? The query brings us back to an old problem. Is the physical woman of the hour chiefly a product of demand and supply? Does the man of the hour lift her, as it were, from the vasty deeps of his dream, and gloat upon her eccentric variations in contour from the female God made? Or does he good-humoredly put up with her for the sake of a quiet life?

I for one hope that last thing is true; for I should hate to suspect the current male of being really in love with this hipless, brassiered, up-and-

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down creature of the moment, this "slim boy" with the oblique seductions of somewhat longer hair and a voice that will never change. I want to think of her as a silly fashion of the dressmakers rather than to impute to him what would amount to a sort of perversion.... However, there we have her in the fiction of our day and date; and only some smirking fellow in a Paris "studio" knows how soon she will step out of it in favor of a later and therefore more "correct" model. Even today there are flounces and things about, and tomorrow we shall find the story-tellers wrapping up the heroine in them with all the zest in the world. The present "she" is at least an improvement in some ways. I like her for giving up the "crooked smile" of yesterday—a contortion out of keeping, to be sure, with her prevailing straight lines.

On the whole, with her common-sense attitude and matter-of-fact speech, she is a sign of one reassuring tendency in the current novel. Readers are after a more wholesome "heart interest" than they were in the tangled morbid years that bred the war. If you happen to have seen the Bulletin of the Authors' League at any time during the past year, you must have noticed how many editors have been asking for "clean love stories". Some of them preside over publications which have been wont to deal in rather sultry wares. What they want now is clean love—stories not besmeared with sex-curiosity or tainted with the sly intention to provide a sort of peepshow within the law for the unmated millions, from the shop-boy on Broadway to the forgotten spinster in West Eastable, Massachusetts. Some of our popular magazines are still rotten enough with the old furtive appeal; but the news-stands are cleaning up a little. It looks as though a considerable part of the reading publics of England and America, having tasted the joys of release from Puritanism and Victorianism and all, had promptly discovered that the theme of sex for its own sake is more a bore than an incitement to people of the Anglo-American strain. It isn't an object of keen intellectual interest to us, as it is to the Latins, or a matter for cheerful laughter. For better or worse, we take it a little heavily. Like religion, it is a thing we really prefer not to talk much about. Unluckily there is no hard and fast line to be drawn between reticence and repression; and here is the literary pander's chance. There are certain words he mustn't print. But he may paint seduction or mutual passion about as realistically as he likes, so long as those words are not used and a perfunctory moral is tacked on, as it were a stamp on a parcel. No American newspaper or magazine will print the word *prostitute* in one syllable, but any of them will describe the article herself in full detail; as likewise tolerably full items of the nameless "statutory offense" from the knowledge of which our virgins are theoretically to be guarded. ... But the war, I conclude, has done something toward clearing up this muggy atmosphere of sexual innuendo and incitement, and to restore a taste among novel-readers for clean adventure, including love.

And there are other serious adventures to which if not the majority, an important minority of our novel-readers are gladly committing themselves. The picturesque localisms of our own country have been pretty thoroughly "covered" by our novelists; but their use has just begun. No place or type has really come into its own until it has found embodiment in a story of

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universal meaning. Hawthorne's Salem, Howells's Boston, Cable's New Orleans, Masters's Spoon River, are all of moment beyond the hour and place because of their fidelity to the hour and place. Something of this has always been suspected by American story-tellers; but until very lately the larger fidelity to humanity through race and place has been more or less confounded with a worship of "local color" for its own sake. Now we are getting a fiction with its tap-root in the soil. The American novel is less and less self-conscious about its Americanism or its localism. And in consequence it is deepening for our own uses and making itself felt abroad as something far more significant if less picturesque than the costume-and-vernacular stuff which was all that the world would have from us in the nineteenth century.

And, thanks largely to the war, this tendency to reach out and comprehend is increasingly reciprocal. It is plain that no force now active in America, not even the force of popular government as represented by senatorial majorities, can clamp down again the shutters or readjust the blinders that kept us from seeing what an interesting place the big world is. Amazing how our idea of foreign parts has changed already. Once we used them for touring purposes, as Mark Twain's "Innocents Abroad" slily or ingenuously (according as you interpret the author) set forth our sense of everything outside America as outworn or artificial or absurd—outlandish! It was great fun those days, to jog round the globe and chuckle at the silly ways of foreigners, safe in the consciousness that New York or West Sarum, Illinois, was waiting there, back home, with its sane ways and sensible language to fall back on when the sights and the gibberish elsewhere got to be a bore; back home where the frogs and wops and chinks had, in the main or at least in public, to toe the American mark.

Naturally our fiction made similar use of regions "abroad". The adventure romancers found what they wanted there, in the picturesqueness and remoteness of princesses, pirates, sacred jewels, and so on. The smells of the East were invaluable, and touches of native jargon, Paris or Hindustan, "helped a lot" in creating the desired illusion of atmosphere. But you took none of that seriously—it was just the understood and necessary trickery of the trade. Once, some time back, Kipling seemed to be opening a window for us; but Kipling, after all, while he posed as an insider in his India, was really the British outsider condescending to the place and people of his momentary sojourn. Never for a moment does he fail to think of his "natives" as of an inferior race; and the thrilling thing about his most popular poem is the ineffable generosity of the white man who actually gives the wall to Gunga Din. For a moment we tolerate the surprising suspicion that even the brown man may be a burden-bearer in his way. In his way—that was it: poor devil, it could never be our way. Kipling's "East is East and West is West" put another hasp on the shutter of our real vision of what lies beyond the white man's (that is, the Anglo-American's) easy apprehension.

Not that our own more serious fiction has failed to make valuable use of, and in some measure to interpret, races and places without our own gates. We had acquired, for instance, a by no means trivial Rome from Hawthorne and Howells and Marion Crawford. But of the Rome of Rome's nov-

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elists we knew nothing or next to nothing, of the Italian as seen and interpreted by himself. Or this was nearly true; for it occurs to me that ten or a dozen years ago excellent English versions of Fogazzaro and one or two others were beginning to appear. They seem to have found a very limited audience, though. Of Spanish life as interpreted by her many brilliant novelists we knew nothing. De Maupassant was the only French writer a large English public really had any acquaintance with. There were the Russians, of course, whom the enthusiasm of Howells and others had lifted to a kind of ardently gloomy following; and Ibsen's vogue led to the venture of translating now and then some bit of Scandinavian fiction which was fairly sure of critical praise and popular neglect. South America, of course, was not on the literary map. Somehow we hadn't waked up to the realization of the immense riches of fiction from which we were shut off not by any fatal barrier of racial character or temperament, but by a mere stupid film of language.

But now we are discovering as a nation what so many of our boys and girls discovered "over there" on a recent occasion,—that these unlucky foreigners have homes of their own worth admiring, and decent ways, and honest laughter, and even morals above contempt. The French war stories, and Couperus, and Bojer and other Scandinavians, and Ibáñez and a whole flock of Spaniards, and newly conveyed masterpieces from South America and the Balkans and where not: all these are now a part of the regular fare of most intelligent and (the real test of a tendency) many unintelligent readers, in England and America. I don't think any sort of radical international tendency is responsible for our aroused knowledge of and interest in these new literary possessions. But what "gets" us in these books, from so many different quarters and racial stocks, in so many different tongues, is that they have so patently a common denominator. For all their differences of color and finish, their human texture is the same. How much like us, when we get them on the basis of a common tongue, these people are or how much like them we are! Laughter and anguish, greed and sacrifice, love and death: these, it seems, are also the great concerns of people "abroad", of the foreigners whose kinship we have had hidden from us by obstacles of dress and manner and accent. Our response to this opening of the doors to foreign fiction is fast growing more general and generous. A sound foundation is being laid for future understanding, whether it is to call itself internationalism or a leaguing of nations or just a broadly human entente. From what the booksellers report, and from the evidence of the publishers' output and announcements, we Americans are actually looking for good stuff from all points of the compass with some eagerness, in strong contrast with the passive resistance we offered "foreign translations" before the war.

I suspect that one of our weaknesses as a racial reading public is that we are so much split up. We cannot, like the Latins, take our religion humorously and our humor lightly. In a way humor seems to be our religion, whenever sentiment isn't; our partition between the two is stout. In other words we resign ourselves to being either that solemn ass Youth,—the fellow who wouldn't be able to keep on loving and daring if he ever got a glimpse of himself in the glass,

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—or this professional funny man, whose sense of the incongruous forbids that he should admire anything heartily. In everyday life an American who cannot handle the humorous patter of the moment as well as his neighbor is sadly handicapped in the game of social existence. A few slang phrases will serve his turn; but he must seem to use them with a *gusto*. If this goes bitterly against his grain, there is a kind of sanctuary for him in the solemn-ass stories of the sentimentalists: which somehow have a pretty good standing of their own. Whether we like ourselves better as solemn asses or as silly asses is nobody's business, but it might be better if we did not need to settle ourselves deliberately in either corner of the literary stable. Fiction really is capable of gradations between "Dere Mable" and "The Re-creation of Brian Kent"; and it will be a good thing for the world at large when the vast majority of our fellow citizens who write and read novels awake to the fact.

Let us not end, however, upon this self-depreciatory note. Without flapping her wings too loudly or screaming too shrilly, post-bellum America may fairly take comfort in her generally respectable attitude toward the novel as a serious form of art, whether for the delectation or the edification of her children. The pursuit of rot for its own sake becomes, on the whole, a less popular and less generally tolerated sport among both the writers and the readers of our fiction.

NOLENS VOLENS

An Eccentric Sonnet, in a New Form

BY ISAAC GOLDBERG

WHY should I pen a sonnet to a maid
Whose cold, unanswering look, like painted fire,
No warmth possesses and can none impart?
Why should I write (and after all I've said
To kindle bright the flame of her desire!)
Mere words of love that sting, like poisoned dart,
Not her who reads, but—ah!—the poet's heart!

What lass, with half the wooing I have done
Would not with twice the loving thus repay
An honest lover with an honest lot,
And glad herself, make still a happier one?
Why should I pen a sonnet, then, this day
To her for love of whom I lie distraught?
Why should I pen a sonnet?—Nay, I'll not!!

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THE LONDONER

Profits from Novel-Writing — Hardy's Technique — John Galsworthy— Dangers to the London Book Trade—Forthcoming Novels by Wells, George, Walpole, Mackenzie, D. H. Lawrence—"Reputations" and Douglas Goldring— Literary Critics Love One Another—St. John Ervine's Adaptation—Publishers' Readers Who also Turn an Honest Penny.

LONDON, *June* 1, 1920.

OF purely literary news there is very little to record at the moment, because, while most of our authors must be busy upon one form or another of literary activity, there has rarely been a time when there has been less sign of their busyness. London has lately been occupied with two principal events—the will of the late Charles Garvice, and its contrast with that of Dickens, and with the eightieth birthday of Thomas Hardy. Garvice left, as the result of his brilliant capture of the cheap market for love stories of a popular character, no less than £71,000 (on the old exchange $355,000), and Dickens left £80,000. I doubt if many other English authors will leave as much. Hall Caine, with so many successful plays to his credit, may do so. I cannot at the moment recall the name of anybody else likely to reach such an amount. Our normally successful writers are good spenders, and I suppose there is always temptation in the notion that as much money as a popular book produces can always be made by a successor. In general, however, incomes from literature run somewhat lower, unless the author has the good fortune to attain early success in both England and America, and to live long thereafter, with the same success. Naturally, film rights will in future lead to the making of larger sums. May they be as well husbanded as the profits of Charles Garvice! There is nothing like pecuniary rewards for creating the assumption in the ordinary mind that literature is a thing of real importance, and a calling of which one need not be ashamed.

* * * *

Hardy, I am sure, will leave nothing like the sum credited to Garvice. For one thing, he has written fewer books, and, for another, their total sales must be smaller than those of the great novel merchant (I use the term without disrespect). But Hardy enjoys the respect of almost all intelligent English readers. He stands right at the head of living novelists. I remember reading, however, in a critical book by Ford Madox Hueffer, the assertion that his work is not "technically interesting". This is very good, but not quite true. I still think that the technical skill of the first few chapters of "The Woodlanders" is extraordinary. Moreover, the entire technique of so early a book as "Under the Greenwood Tree" has always

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struck me as remarkable. This to mention no others. On his eightieth birthday Hardy is to receive an address of congratulation from the Authors' Society. It is to be conveyed to Dorchester by Augustine Birrell, John Galsworthy, and Sir Anthony Hope Hawkins. I am reminded that one paper, still befogged about Galsworthy's status, calls him "Sir John". This is a reminder of a lamentable mistake in a recent "Honours List", when Galsworthy's acceptance of a knighthood was wrongly assumed, and the honor was declined. I do not know whether one can really decline a title after it has been bestowed and announced; but the fact is that Galsworthy remains plain "Mr." to those who know him.

* * * *

Galsworthy's new play, "The Skin Game", has long passed the consecutive "run" of any other play of his. It is characteristically serious and sincere work, probably the best thing on the boards at the moment, and enthusiastically received in some quarters; but it suffers from the author's preference for types over humans, and is not a really great play, as some would have us believe. All the same, I am glad that it is having the success it clearly enjoys, for it is a remarkable thing that in the theatre Galsworthy has always been hitherto disappointed of any large public. Golden opinions he has always won, but not recompense in the Garvician sense. In the novel, on the other hand, he has really reaped a full harvest of popularity.

* * * *

What terrifies me at the moment is not any question concerning the income of writers like Garvice or Galsworthy or Hardy, but the dangers to which every kind of book is now liable. I can only repeat what I hear, but there seems to be truth in the reports which reach me from several sources as to the alarming prospects for the future. In order to justify my fears I must mention some of the stories which have been told me. First of all, costs of production advance so overwhelmingly that it becomes increasingly difficult to make books pay upon prewar or even wartime sales (wartime sales being, on the whole, larger than sales were before reading became a national pastime). In order to make a profit, publishers have been driven to raise their prices. So far, so good. Everything else, except tube fares, park seats, and public lavatories, has gone up, and there seems no logical reason why books should not cost more. But I am told that the public is showing the cloven hoof. Not only has it turned against the plays upon which it has been feeding for the last six years, to the great prosperity of the producers and their parasites. It is beginning to jib at the prices of books. It is refusing to buy them. What with the hot weather and possibly the absence of any really noteworthy productions, the booksellers are receiving less than their fair share of patronage. They wait for customers in relatively empty shops. Naturally they are cutting down their orders for newer books. They are afraid of a serious slump. Perhaps it will not come; but they are afraid of it. Booksellers are a timid class, and naturally; for, if they are not careful, they can be made to carry heavy dead stocks, and their losses may well be disastrous unless some leaven of enthusiasm comes to the rescue.

Books, then, are not booming. They are "slow". It is quite true that novels published before the war at 4s. 6d. net are now published at 8s. net or 8s. 6d.

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net or 9s. net. They cannot be produced, at a profit, for less. But if the public will not pay the price, something will have to be done. Already there is little enough in it, when all the manufacturers and agents have taken their increased prices. I shall wait, therefore, with interest to see what happens. But this is not all. You may think that I am too much of an alarmist. Very well, perhaps I am. But what comes after? I hear that of the big London booksellers two at least are in a most unfortunate position for bookbuyers. These two firms are among the largest there are in the West End. And one of them has had his shop sold away from him to a firm of cheap jewelers (although he offered a hefty price for it himself), so that he will in a few months' time be without a place to lay his stock. And the other, an old-established firm, has recently been bought up by a large haberdashery house, which, if the business does not show a proper investment return, will be able at the end of a fixed term to take over the premises for its ordinary business. This is indeed a poor lookout for the West End of London, which contains already too few first-class shops in which one can buy anything but the cheapest kind of book.

Paper was recently said to be coming down in price; but I am told that this, in the cant phrase, is "only a rumor". What happened was that some people who had been holding large stocks in expectation of a further rise in price suddenly took fright at the newspaper tales of slumping prices everywhere, and began to unload at a slightly reduced figure. The relief affected only one or two hasty purchasers, and there is no sign at the moment of any genuine reduction. Therefore publishers are faced with difficulties no less than they had foreseen.

It must not be thought that books are being held up by these disquieting movements. Far from it. I marvel at the stuff I see advertised in the literary papers. Some of it must be extraordinary rubbish. Who buys it, I cannot think. But then it is always a mystery to me who buys anything in the shape of new books. That is not a luxury I allow myself. It is certain that many houses are galloping on with huge lists, or if not huge ones at any rate lists containing books which I should personally regard as very poor starters. It would be invidious to mention names, but I am amazed at the adventurousness of some of our medium houses. May their confidence be justified! Or, rather, may the books which they are embarking upon the troubled waters be better than they seem from their titles and the things I hear about their contents!

* * * *

One or two items of news suggest that the autumn may see some interesting novels. Wells is at work upon one, about which I have heard no details. W. L. George, I hear, has finished a story of the press and journalistic experience. About the last one that was published (Philip Gibbs's "The Street of Adventure", which was rather too romantically named and conceived) had a certain vogue, and of course Courlander's "Mightier than the Sword" attracted some attention. As a rule, however, the newspaper novel does not amuse the general public to any great extent. I was long ago warned of this by a novelist who was the least "literary" novelist I ever met. He said, "Books about writers are always rot, and they never sell." I expect that George's book will disprove this assertion. I hope it will be better

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than most. But I wonder how any novelist can make a journalist a romantic figure. I would as soon undertake to create romance out of a novelist or a publisher!

To come to some of the other items of the autumn fiction list. Hugh Walpole, just back from what seems to have been a remarkably happy and successful tour in America,—where I gather he made many new friends and renewed several older relationships,—has revised and completed a long story which should cut a great figure in the world. It is called, at present, "The Captives", and contains somewhere about a quarter of a million words. Good gracious! What a feat in these days! However, Walpole likes long novels himself—witness his enthusiasm for Trollope—and where there has been such enjoyment in the writing there must surely be enjoyment even greater in the reading, for the innumerable admirers of Walpole's work, both in America and England.

Mackenzie has so recently published "The Vanity Girl" that I should not imagine his next novel will be ready before 1921; but when it comes it ought to be, from what I am told about its title, a sort of companion piece to "Poor Relations". I will not say more about it at present, in case I betray a confidence; but I hope it will be a better book than "The Vanity Girl", which is being stoned into great sale here.

There is one excellent piece of news which I am glad to record. This is that D. H. Lawrence has completed a new story. It is only just finished, and the author, who is living now in Sicily, seems in it to have departed somewhat from the work with which his name has latterly been associated. As I have not seen the book I cannot say what its theme is, but I am told that it is humorous, which promises a complete breakaway. The title under which the book is to appear delights me. It is "The Bitter Cherry".

* * * *

Many of our young writers have received adulation this year at the hands of that enthusiastic essayist, S. P. B. Mais. Perhaps Mr. Mais's book ought properly to have been published before, rather than after, one that has just appeared here. This is Douglas Goldring's "Reputations". In the new book several of the reputations made or recorded with such glee by Mr. Mais are blasted untimely by a remorseless young critic. Goldring, however, lives in a glass house, for his own activities in the novel are not few, and it will be perfectly easy for the writers attacked to turn up their august noses at this young man's strictures by comparing his creative work with their own. Of course they will do *no such thing*! They never do! No novelist ever thinks his own work better than that of his critics. Yet I am advised by a sagacious observer that the young novelists as a whole are less jealous of one another than are the young poets. It may be that the young novelists are not capable of such sensitiveness as the young poets, or that they are better self-pleased. I do not, however, think this is true. In fact I am surprised how humane our young writers are toward one another. And how friendly are our young poets, who seem endlessly to review each other's books in the weekly press. The literary life is a strange one. When I adopted it I never guessed how strange.

Goldring has been about in the literary world for a number of years, but during some part of the war he was in Ireland. Years ago, he was in the office of "The English Review", when

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it was run by Ford Madox Hueffer. In this capacity he read the proofs and seems to have had considerable opportunities for meeting and appraising many of the well-known writers who made "The English Review" in its early days the most distinguished thing of its kind in the market. He then, I think, edited a monthly magazine called "The Tramp", and published several travel books. Since that time he has written novels, one of which I have certainly seen advertised recently in American papers; and quite lately he has appeared in the rôle of satirist. The objects of his satire have been his contemporaries, the poets. It was Goldring who invented the phrase "infant Sitwells baying at the moon" and the name of "the Wufflet" for young Alec Waugh, the author (at some precocious age) of "The Loom of Youth". It is amusing to see that Alec Waugh bears no malice for this disrespectful nickname, for "Reputations" is published by Chapman and Hall, with which firm the name of Arthur Waugh (Alec's father) has long been associated. Alec Waugh is himself a member of the firm.

* * * *

Talking above of the kindness of our young writers to each other reminds me to relate this anecdote. The other evening I met one of the most prominent literary critics in this country. I was pleased with him. Later I met another, even more distinguished literary critic. The conversation turned upon the first. (It should be understood that both these men belong to an older generation than the one I have been discussing.) The second dismissed Number One. He said: "Oh, he's no good." I said, surprised: "Really? I thought he was supposed to be rather good." Number Two answered: "Yes, he is. But, if you know what I mean, he's as near being good as a man can be who is *no* good!" The anecdote is not without its point. I now wait for an opportunity of learning the opinion of Number One upon his detractor. It should be very interesting. I ought perhaps to explain that in the comment as made to me there was not the least animus. Indeed, there was a special declaration that Number One was "a dear chap". I must admit that this attitude of one man in the same line toward another who is in no sense an immediate rival has immense interest for me. I am sometimes accused of being ungenerous to my neighbors, a charge which I always feel to be unjust; and I think this somewhat expert judgment is as good an example of candid appraisement as I know. One cannot help having opinions upon others in the same department of work, and there ought to be some rule whereby one is not debarred from candor through a fear of being thought jealous. I have heard scientists speak with a feeling which is generally absent from even the most scathing comments of literary men. Strangely enough, I have heard more praise of rivals from doctors than from any other class; but it must be remembered that doctors have a greater clannish justification for praise of each other than can be generally admitted by other sections of the community. They necessarily must preserve the prestige of their craft. I am told that the greatest sinners in respect of interpraise or common feeling—what is called "sticking together"—are Jews, Scotsmen, Roman Catholics, Cambridge men, and another class not to be mentioned in print. They "stick together". With doctors, as I have said, the reason is apparent. They are

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professionals. Also, I am a layman; and naturally one is most likely to hear candid criticism from professionals to professionals.

Professionalism is a fascinating subject. All professionals talk "shop", and I like shop. To invert the remark of the old lady who did not like green peas, I like shop, and I'm glad I like shop, because if I didn't like it I should never hear it, and I like it. Hazlitt once wrote an essay on the conversation of literary men, in which he said that whoever had ever enjoyed it never wanted to listen to any other kind of conversation. Personally I agree with Hazlitt, but I wonder if the average person would do the same. What I have quoted earlier about the distaste of the reading public for novels about writers of any kind would seem to suggest the reply. But on the other hand, there has to be recalled the fact that such causeries as this (I except my own, of course, from so favorable a generalization) are extremely popular, both in England and America. I do not like to hear amateurs talking about books. Their talk never seems to me to have any "body". But I do like to hear practitioners in any craft talking about their work. It may be snobbery, but I feel that I am listening to something authentic. That is why, although I detest tea-parties such as the women writers of all countries enjoy, I like nothing better than to hear several men speaking intimately about the things they care most for, in the most technical way. It is a pleasing occupation to listen to such. Today I heard three writers extolling a novel called "La Chartreuse de Parme" to another writer who had never read that great novel. It pleased me to hear their expert comments. The comments would not have persuaded a non-writer. To me they were conclusive. One man said, with an air of finality: "'The Brothers Karamazov', 'War and Peace', and 'La Chartreuse de Parme' are the three greatest novels ever written". That's the sort of thing I like to hear said. And it was not contradicted. How could it be?

* * * *

St. John Ervine is coming back to the States later on, I hear, to be present at the production of an extraordinarily interesting adaptation for the stage, made by himself, of one of the earliest and most fascinating novels of a writer often mentioned in this causerie. It is a remarkable thing that in the course of the work Ervine made an interesting discovery. He tried to use as much as possible of the original dialogue. As stage dialogue it was as ineffective as in the novel it was appropriate and right. It all had to be rewritten. This serves to show how different are the arts of the novel and the play. When the play is produced it will be charming to make the comparison for oneself, and see just where the difference lies. Ervine's novel "The Foolish Lovers" is not yet out here; but it must be almost ready. It is being published by Collins, for whom J. D. Beresford (a friend of Ervine's, as all who know him must be) acts as reader.

* * * *

Beresford, like some other novelists who act in a similar capacity for publishers, issues his books through the firm for which he "reads". But there are others, again, who do the reverse. I was interested the other day to learn of the career of C. E. Lawrence (no relation to D. H.), who is a novelist, and whose later novels have all appeared with the Collins imprint. His must be almost a unique case, for he started doing other work in the office of

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John Murray, and only later qualified as a professional reader and writer. Naturally, it is of enormous importance to a publisher to have as his adviser somebody who really knows something about contemporary authors. Beresford is a case in point. Nobody would deny him a considerable acquaintance with what is valuable in modern letters. His long experience as a journalist has taught him to "size up" talent when it comes his way, and in that secondary branch of "reading", the introduction of new books of more than common interest, he must be invaluable to his firm.

It would be interesting to know just exactly how many professional writers are also "readers". Several, such as E. V. Lucas, are well known to exercise the double function; but the number is much larger than is generally supposed. After all, the task of being "a sort of a kind of hermaphrodite, soldier and sailor too" is an invidious one, because rejected authors may misunderstand the causes of their misfortune, and attribute it to the wrong motive. I do not think there can be much of that. All such men are liable to err, but they are most keen of all to discover what is good, as well as what is salable. I wonder how they attain their position. Either, I suppose, they drift into reading as a side-show, or they write to some extent in self-defense. And, in the latter instance, do they ever feel tempted to steal ideas? It would be hard to say. A novel I once read, called "A Marrying Man" ("readers" being, apparently, amorously inflammable creatures), made the hero, a reader, lift for his own fell purposes the whole notion of a novel which he had professionally examined. Other tales by writers equally trustworthy have brought similar charges. I do not believe one of them. The game would be too risky. All the same, one would rather rely upon a reader who was the dumb background figure which one never saw. He, one would think, should be above suspicion of bias or dishonesty. I must inquire into this matter.

As far as I recollect, I have never seen a man who professionally "read" a published book of mine. Strangely enough, I once received from a publisher a copy of his reader's report upon an early effort which has been long destroyed. I believe my notorious modesty must be due to this early contact with critical candor. One phrase haunts me still (I am not going to quote it). It is like an epitaph, far more accurate than the one that Keats wrote for himself because I am afraid it is still the last word in criticism of my amiable, well-intentioned work. I have seen few publishers' reports since then, though I have written a few; but I have never seen any upon my own books. I sometimes wonder if all reports are as compellingly ruthless in their analysis of youthful talent as the one I remember. Also, I wonder if many publishers "tell" what their readers think. I do not believe they do, and it is probably just as well. Otherwise, only those writers with overweening confidence (or, of course, insuperable modesty) would persist in writing books at all. Thus, many a masterpiece would be lost to the world, for I find that few authors care for the truth as it is seen regarding their work by somebody else. I am reminded of the true story of an author who asked for the candid opinion of an expert. The opinion was candidly given. The author, puzzled and chagrined, said, disappointedly: "Oh, I thought you really *knew!*"

SIMON PURE

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COMPLAINT DEPARTMENT

The Title is ---

MAGNIFICENTLY simple! Like all great ideas. (That's how you know them for the great ideas they are, isn't it? By their magnificent simplicity. Yes. For of course in practice they never work out just right. . . .) Well, I got it from reading an interview with George Moore, an interview extracted from George Moore (with exquisite difficulty) by George Moore. He was defending his course in publishing his books at two guineas apiece, edition limited to one thousand copies. And the principal argument he used was his aversion to anything savoring of commercialism in literature. Convincing, he was! But a moment later I thought of a point Moore had overlooked, a point about titles.

He ought not to use them. He ought to number his works. "Opus 7", by George Moore, is sufficient. The title means nothing to his readers, nor does the ostensible theme of his work. For them, it is enough that a new book by George Moore offers. They will subscribe for it before publication, anyway; what do they care for the title? They know what it will *be*—Some Moore by George Moore. A title is bait; it has a commercial taint. An artist should be above such a play to the public.

This was clear, conclusive—as all aspects of art inevitably are the instant they present themselves. But, I reflected, if this is the case respecting Mr. Moore, it is the case respecting all our writers whose work, in the words of Mr. Conrad, "aspires to the condition of art". Or whose work, so aspiring, is generally conceded to attain its artistic goal. For example, take Mr. Conrad, whose new novel "The Rescue" is, I believe, his twenty-third volume. "Opus 23", by Joseph Conrad, is all that *I*, for one, care to know. And that must be true of ninety-nine per cent of Conrad's readers. The remaining one per cent read him by a mistake on the part of the librarian in getting hold of the wrong volume.

Everybody knows, anyway, that there are not enough good titles to go around. The use of opus-numbers would avoid some vexing duplications, such as occur yearly. It would avoid title-misunderstandings, which are among the most lamentable misfortunes of readers. The classic anecdote, probably, is of the sheep-grower who asked for Ruskin, misled by the title which suggested valuable advice about his business. Ruskin was notably misleading in his titles. On the other hand, some titles mean nothing until you read the story—"Nostromo", for instance; though if you know Italian or Spanish you may glean an idea from hearing the name (and scarcely the right one). After one has read a book, "Opus 17" is as good a handle by which to refer to it as "Sawdust" or "Green Pomegranates".

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But perhaps it will be argued that numbers are hard to remember. In the field of music, they seem not to be. I am not in doubt when I hear someone speak of the "Fifth Symphony"; "Beethoven's" is assumed unless you say you mean someone else's fifth. "His third novel" when talking of Joseph Hergesheimer is enough. Why bother with "The Three Black Pennys"?

It will be adduced, very likely, that even in music opus-numbers are scanted for titles—the "Pathetic Symphony", etc. My answer is that these titles are more often than not misleading, as in the instance of the "Moonlight Sonata". The best composers use them sparingly, though, to be sure, they are partly at the mercy of persons who "program" their compositions, telling what it is all about in the outrageous fashion in which publishers too frequently treat their authors' masterpieces on the paper jacket.

But in all this I am reasonable. I do not recommend opus-numbers for short stories, remember! To open "The Saturday Evening Post" and find spread across the top of a page, "Opus 7,932, by Ben Ames Williams", would be distinctly unsatisfactory because one's attention would be drawn to the fact that Mr. Williams had produced his 7,932nd piece of fiction and a doubt might creep in.... No, only for books. Then, except in the case of Carolyn Wells whose books number well over a hundred, the size of the opus-number could scarcely excite undue attention. And think of the double-stress the use of opus-numbers would confer on the name of the author! Then, indeed, would authors come into their full estate as they cannot quite do now. For even in the case of E. Phillips Oppenheim, the attraction of such a title as "The Great Impersonation" undoubtedly sold some copies of the book and detracted, by a trifle, from the glory that was E. Phillips and the grandeur that was Oppenheim.

Do you recall how, a hundred or more years ago, an author always had a title that took up a whole page? Like: "The Wicked Wonder; Being an Account of a Marvellous but Thorough-Attested Circumstance Occurring in the County of Somerset Whereby", etc., running the reader breathless before he got to chapter I? Later we got rid of this habit and now the only survival of it is introductions by Mr. Wells and title-headings of De Morgan's chapters. Nowadays the ideal title is a crisp enigma, like "Sawdust". The next step is to replace "Sawdust" by "Opus 17". There is no objection that I can see to a further word or two where the author's work has been in various departments. For example, let us suppose that Agnes Semicolon has written three books of an inspirational character, called "Opus 1", "Opus 2", and "Opus 3" respectively. She now writes a novel. "Novel No. 1 (Opus 4)" by Agnes Semicolon seems to me a perfectly proper formula to be recited on the title-page. I am not so strict, either, as not to allow occasionally such a designation as "Short Stories in the Key of Compassion", by Joshua Standstill—entirely analogous to "Somebody's Songs in E-Flat". Which reminds me that I wish when people translate a work from another language they would not so frequently think it necessary to transpose it, too. Songs may be required to be transposed for particular voices; but literature scarcely requires to be transposed for a presumed different order of intelligence. Although...perhaps ...if some good American novels were

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transposed a little, they might get across in England.

Another little thing: if I write a novel all I can hope for now is to sell first serial, dramatic, movie, second serial, and reprint rights (besides what the book brings in, and such picayunes as translation, etc.). If I come through with "Opus 4", say, I am confident I can sell it, additionally and enormously, for exclusive reproduction on the victorgraph.

—GRANT M. OVERTON

A Bonus for the Poet

THE very elegance and subjectiveness of the poetic mood allow the gaunt wolf's gnawing such ample opportunity of making itself felt, that the poets' most pressing demand is not for amaranth and moly,—however they may rave on in verse,—but for good strong food and plenty of it. And how are we going to satisfy that demand? It used to be that when a poet's wife came bearing bills he would simply say, "What, $20 for the butcher? I'll have to dig up another dead love!" Whereupon he would seize his quill, and thousands of eyes would shortly dew up over some such result as this:

Swift on the primrose's first flush
From twilight grasses where she long has lain,
In some dim, gasping, lark-sweet hush
She will come back, she will come back again.

And he is right—she will come back, whenever bills press at this particular season. Her chances of remaining buried more than a year at a stretch are growing slimmer all the time, and the worst of it is that little good will come of her sacrifice. Dead loves used to be good for a week or two but now they don't provide food for more than three or four days. Likewise with shoes and armchairs and all the rest of the poetic paraphernalia,—while they have kept the modern pace in actual cost, their buying power has shrunk with the years until the little worn shoe in mother's hand is hardly worth a cabbage and the empty armchair simmering by the fire won't bring a peck of potatoes.

Either the market value of poetic wares will have to be inflated to fit present-day conditions or some sort of bonus will have to be provided for our singing brothers: for the tradition that poets are thin and eat but sparingly is like most traditions in that it won't bear investigation. As a matter of fact poets are heavily cushioned as a race (the ill-advised exposure of a young bard's photograph having been known to spoil the sale of an entire edition of delicate verse); and if they have a hungry look, it does not mean that secretly their appetites are less carnal than ours—only more insatiate. Some of the tenderest lyrics of our time have been inspired by the rosiness of beef or the delicate brown of spring lamb eaten incognito, but it is only when a poet has attained great years or reputation that he may allow the perfect health of his appetite to be fully sensed.

I have seen a greybeard of the profession at a public dinner, while discoursing of fauns and white lilies, "wrap himself around" as a vulgar expression has it, not only his own meal but those of his neighbors on either side, holding his victims spellbound with one hand and eating with the other. And it is said that no less a person than D'Annunzio serves himself with half a block of ice cream and divides the other half among his ten companions.

—CONSTANCE MURRAY GREENE

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THE SOCIALIZATION OF THE LIBRARY

BY ARTHUR E. BOSTWICK

Librarian, St. Louis Public Library

WHEN one man lends another a dollar, we may focus our attention on the dollar, or on the men. The transaction remains the same in either case, but we fit it differently into our mental scheme of things, and its reaction on what we think and what we do is different in the two instances. This is typical of much. The material world is made up of persons and things; both enter into most of the events that interest us. We are naturally so little introspective that things first claim our attention. After a while we begin to discover ourselves and others. Persons begin to interest us; we become socialized.

This is what is happening to the public library. The things and persons of its world are books and readers. Focusing his attention at first solely on the books, the early librarian built strongholds to keep them safe; he studied their material and the ways of putting it together. He devised ways of arranging them on the shelves and catalogues to enable him to find them. In doing all this he was thinking of himself, as the custodian of the books, not of the reader—still less of the community as a body of potential readers. This was natural, of course. The physical conditions of book construction were such that a book was a rare and precious thing, not to be handled lightly. The community at large neither cared for books nor knew how to read them.

The tale of how these conditions came to be altered is the story of the progress of civilization since the invention of printing. Books are now easily duplicated in great quantity: the ability to read and understand them has become the rule rather than the exception; the users of books, beginning as a small and restricted group, now embrace, or should embrace, nearly all members of the community. Why not all? The very fact that the librarian asks this question shows that he is taking the social viewpoint. It is but a step from asking to answering, or making the attempt. A step further is to act, and action of this kind is now being taken by American libraries. It explains the many library activities in which, according to European librarians, we have gone altogether beyond our sphere. They are right, provided the attention is focused on the book alone. We are right from our own standpoint, because we are thinking primarily now not of the book but of the reader, and not altogether of actual readers but also of potential ones.

Why should a librarian inquire into the characteristics of the residents in his community—their nationality,

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their literacy, their interests? Why should he make an effort to get in touch with their various groups; religious, political, racial, educational, and social? Why should he offer such of these as are organized, a meeting-place in his buildings? Why should he endeavor to extend and supplement the education of those who are inadequately educated? Why should he be interested in social welfare, in business and industry, in all sorts of community movements, in conventions, in churches, in political campaigns? All these things seem far removed from the functions of a simple custodian of books. And they are so removed. But they are very near indeed to one who is on the lookout for readers, actual and potential. They are sometimes near when they do not seem to be so. They are akin to the so-called "general advertising" which is a reflex of the growing socialization of business. You may notice in the advertising pages of magazines not only publicity intended to direct your attention to Smith's cameras and Jones's tractors, but also to the merits of tractors and cameras in general. The librarian is trying to interest his community in books in general and in the things that will lead them to books; and this includes almost all forms of social activity—religious, political, educational, and industrial.

Anyone who does not understand this viewpoint should ponder the related developments in the business and industrial world. Take modern salesmanship, for instance, with its insistence on psychology. The salesman deals with shoes, with hardware, with foodstuffs. Where does psychology touch these? It does not touch them at all; but he deals also with buyers, and in his relations with them psychology is all important, especially when the buyers are only potential and he wishes to make them actual. Take industry, where a large part of the employer's time is now occupied with plans for holding his men, for maintaining their health and strength, and for keeping them satisfied and good-natured. Everywhere we see signs that the world is awaking to the importance of its human content; the socialization of the library is only a small section of what is happening.

One of the satisfactory features of a policy that deals primarily with people instead of things is that man is a self-mover, physically and mentally. Mohammed, as the familiar quip goes, found it far easier to go to the mountain than to induce the mountain to come to him. All that we have to do to man is to start the wheels and guide them; there is no dead weight to be dealt with. And in most cases the wheels are ready to move: there is steady pressure against the obstacles due to our own ignorant and passive attitude. Modify that attitude; clear away the barrier; there will be instant results.

We have in the St. Louis Public Library and its branches about fifteen rooms that are available for public meetings. In the course of the year about four thousand such gatherings are held under our roofs—all that we can accommodate. Staff-rooms, workrooms, even corridors have been pressed into service upon occasion. We do not have to urge anyone to use our facilities. We do not have to go out and form clubs "under the auspices" of the library. The club microbe is normally present in the human subject. Give it a culture-medium and it begins at once to form colonies. The corner saloon used to be a good place for it to multiply. It responds quickly to environment;

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what kind of groups would you expect to be controlled and guided by that particular kind of hospitality? In the library they take on a different guise. They may be political, educational, industrial, religious, musical, or social. They may represent any one of a thousand crystallizations and recrystallizations of community thought and effort. We make but two requirements—freedom and order.

"But these are not libraries at all, they are community clubs!" This was the illuminating comment of an eminent architect after he had listened to an explanation of what would be required in a system of branch library buildings. He was quite right; the socialization of the library has naturally and inevitably made a club of it—a club of which all well-behaved citizens are members, with nominal dues payable yearly to the tax-collector. This has been a perfectly natural development. Nobody, whether librarians or public, has fought very hard for it; certainly nobody has opposed it. It has come about like the growing of plants in a garden; it is the result of evolution, not of revolution.

Of course the use of the library's buildings for community gatherings is not the only evidence of its socialization. The social trend may now appear almost anywhere throughout its organization. In registering their readers many libraries are now grouping them; the librarian can show you a separate card-index of children, of negroes, of aliens, of non-residents. This is but a beginning. We may in the future be able to turn to files of those who are interested in numismatics or of workers in the various local industries. As is always the case, the public, which has no traditions of technique, is continually demanding, in a way that betrays recognition of the socializing process, information that is far beyond our present power to give. The historical society wants a mailing-list of persons who read local history; an investigating cleric asks: "What do clergymen read?" These are social questions: they are about people. We cannot answer them from our records, because the socializing process has not yet modified this part of our machinery.

Naturally enough, personnel responds to a socializing tendency sooner than machinery, because it is itself social. But a machine, since it is a tool, is nothing but an extension of personality and will make its belated response in time. I have been curious enough, at this point, to glance at the statistical form filled out by American libraries at the request of the American Library Association. There are in this blank fifty-seven items, of which only seven refer to persons, making a liberal interpretation of the word. There could, perhaps, be no more striking demonstration of the fact that our records are not keeping pace with our practice. This discrepancy runs through all the mechanical part of our work.

Not long ago, in organizing an exhibition of books suitable for Christmas presents, we concluded that the primary objects of our solicitude should be the recipients, and we accordingly classified these and arranged the books in groups according to their suitability for one class of persons or the other. Thus our headings were: "For Housewives", "For the Idler", "For Shut-Ins", "For Reading Aloud", etc. This exhibition has been held several times at the holiday season; recently I noticed that the assistant in charge of making the list, while retaining the form, had so worded the headings that the groups were again

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classified by the subject-matter instead of by reaction of that subject-matter on probable readers. Thus they ran: "For Those Who Enjoy Biographies", "For Travelers", "For Art Lovers"; and they might as well, of course, have been simply "Biography", "Travel", "Art", and so on. This shows that socialized machinery, if not watched, sometimes reverts.

This recognition of groups in the community, not only of readers but of potential readers, is steadily increasing and is an important element in the socialization of the library. It may be said to have begun with the special attention paid to children. Within the memory of persons scarcely past middle life, little or no regard was paid in public libraries to children's reading. Some included no books for them at all; in others, where there were such books, they were selected carelessly and there was no one on the staff who understood children or their needs. Special rooms or accommodations for children were generally unheard of until the late 'nineties. And yet such special recognition has now been accorded to this group of readers that librarians specialize in "children's work", every library has its room for children, with carefully selected stock of books and trained assistants, and there are training-schools that devote themselves almost wholly to this particular branch of library education.

In the same way, although not always to the same extent, recognition is accorded to other groups. In the case of civil servants and legislators, for instance, we now have special library accommodations and collections, often in state capitols and city halls; and a special class for training municipal and legislative reference librarians is conducted by the Wisconsin Library Commission. Educators are recognized as a group by the provision of "teachers' rooms", with special collections in pedagogy, the latest text-books, and all sorts of material for classroom use. Each newly arrived immigrant finds himself grouped by the library with others who speak and read his mother tongue, and provided with books and periodicals in that language, together with material for acquainting him with English and with the new and strange conditions that he must meet in his new home—social, political, religious, industrial, and educational. This is Americanization work devoid of the least shade of propaganda, unless that may be so called which is merely an effort to hasten and ease an adjustment that would otherwise come about slowly and painfully—possibly in some cases not at all.

The latest group to receive interested, almost intensive, service from the library is that of "business men"—a somewhat vague and loose assemblage. There can be no doubt, however, that business and industry of all kinds — commerce, transportation, mining, manufactures—was neglected by the older library. It is now coming into its own. The large industrial organizations are establishing libraries or research departments of their own, and these are multiplying with great rapidity. They are forming connections with the local public libraries which are fast learning that the printed and bound book is not the only item of an up-to-date public collection. Added to this must be pamphlets, manuscripts, folders, broadsides,—everything that can serve as source material for the business investigator, whether what he is after is the determination of a policy involving mil-

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lions, or the spelling of a local name in Venezuela or Burma.

The most widespread recognition of groups ever made by libraries was in connection with the war work of the American Library Association. Financed by the Association itself in the early part of the war, this work later became part of that cared for by the united war fund, raised jointly by seven welfare organizations, of which it was one. While this joint action was primarily to avoid multiplicity of "drives", by special request of President Wilson, the recognition of the American Library Association's work as cognate with that of the Y. M. C. A. or the Red Cross was an unconscious admission of the importance of the community and of community groups, in its present scheme of service. Its war service was rendered to groups and sub-groups—to the army, for instance, as one great group, with training-camps, headquarters, and forces in the field as sub-groups; to the navy as a whole and to individual vessels, to the crews of vessels built and operated by the United States Shipping Board, and so on. Since the end of the war this group service has been maintained as far as necessary; and some of it has been taken over by the United States government. It is the desire of the Association to extend it to certain peace groups: for instance, to industrial workers, to the mercantile marine in general, to communities in which there is ignorance of library service or indifference toward it. To this end it is formulating and preparing to carry out a so-called "enlarged program of service", to be financed by general contributions from the friends of libraries.

It will be noted that the service about which we are now speaking has been and will be rendered not by individual libraries but by associated libraries as a body,—by a group to groups, which is a further step in socialization. Libraries and library workers have been very fond of grouping themselves, but such groups have in the past functioned largely as bodies for comparing notes and discussing methods of work. They have only recently undertaken constructive programs, although state library associations have been responsible in many instances for the adoption of advanced library legislation and for the recognition by states of the library as an important part of their educational machinery.

Very recently the grouping process has extended to the workers in libraries, considered as members of the industrial public, and has resulted in the formation of unions, staff associations, and the like. The temper of librarians is such that the complete unionization of library staffs, including affiliation with labor organizations, seems quite unlikely. The desire of most librarians is for professional status. There is, however, a feeling that they must get together locally for betterment of various kinds, including increase of salaries. All this is a phase of library socialization, working inward.

There is a trend, too, toward giving library workers a part of some kind in determining details of operation, and to some extent minor policies, in their institutions. We have as yet no library soviet, nor are we likely to have one, but the "shop committees" now being tried in many industrial plants, are being paralleled in libraries—not copied, for we have here an independent manifestation of the socializing tendency. There are "library councils" here, "staff meetings" there, with all sorts of advisory bodies and staff committees to determine or report

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upon changes or improvements in library methods and regulations. Occasionally we find such a body that has more than advisory powers—that is as purely legislative as Congress is, restrained only by the librarian's veto as the national body is by that of the President. For instance, in our own library, the various rooms in the central building devoted to the use of the staff—the lunch-room, the locker-rooms, the rest and recreation rooms—are controlled absolutely by a committee of the staff. Theoretically its action may be negatived by the librarian, but no such veto is on record.

It would be strange if this interior socialization did not spread to the outside also, and such is the fact. In other words the users of a library are now taking part, with members of the staff, in administrative work. Of course both staff and readers are members of the public and as such are the ultimate owners of the library, but what they do is entirely apart from their share in the institution as public property. For instance, the share taken by readers in book selection is often large and important. Books are frequently purchased to meet a demand, and this demand is that of the reader, shown sometimes indirectly—almost automatically—by increased circulation or multiplied waiting-lists, sometimes by conversation at the charging-desk, sometimes formally by direct request. The public does not seem to know its privileges and powers in this respect, otherwise direct requests for purchase would be proffered in far greater number. Neither does it realize that it is the ultimate maker of library rules—even of those that may be looked on by some as harsh or strict. The library's business is to render the best service to the largest number; it cannot, of course, improve service to a few at the expense of the many. Yet when rules are adopted to protect the rights of the many, the few are sure to regard them as the arbitrary edicts of some library czar. Those who object to them have in truth to deal not with librarians but with their fellow readers. The stroller through a park who would like to pick the flowers is restrained ultimately by the fact that were he allowed to do so there would shortly be no park at all for his fellow strollers to enjoy. It is the fact that the sum total of enjoyment obtainable from the flowers is greater when they stay on their stems than when they are transferred to his vases, that is responsible for the inhibition laid upon him, harshly as it may grate upon his desires.

It being entirely proper to close with a moral, we may note here that socialization and cooperation are very closely allied, and that cooperation or "team work" always means an increase in the comforts and opportunities of the many at the expense of those of the individual. So it is with library socialization. Libraries, in paying more attention to their communities of readers and potential readers, are doubtless curtailing individual privileges here and there and perhaps lessening types of individual service. This moral is for those who consider themselves aggrieved thereby; and if they are good citizens they will profit by pondering it.

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MR. DOOLEY ALIAS FINLEY PETER DUNNE

BY MORRIS R. WERNER

THERE was a saloon-keeper in Chicago who will go down to posterity under an assumed name, the Anti-Saloon League to the contrary notwithstanding. The assumed name is Mr. Dooley, and the man who assumed it for him is Finley Peter Dunne—the man who created a character for America as famous at home and abroad as Theodore Roosevelt. Mr. Dunne came from Chicago, like so many other American writers, and especially humorists. And like those other humorists—George Ade, Ring W. Lardner, and the others—he was a Chicago newspaperman. Finley Peter Dunne became a reporter as soon after he was graduated from the Chicago public schools as a Chicago newspaper would employ him—at the age of eighteen. He worked first for the Chicago "Evening Post", later became city editor of the Chicago "Times", and then became managing editor of the Chicago "Journal".

One James McGarry, a saloonkeeper in Dearborn Street, Chicago, near the office of the Chicago "Tribune", had a happy way of commenting on what he read in the newspapers concerning everything from politics to society. One day he had been reading of Jay Gould's funeral, and his comments on that deceased celebrity were so delicious that Dunne, hearing them, thought of writing them out with slight alterations and additions as the thoughts of a Colonel McNeery. The result appeared in the Chicago "Evening Post", whereupon Dunne continued to write more of Colonel McNeery's observations without troubling the original, McGarry, for further inspiration. McGarry began to feel irritation at the way in which he was being used as a medium of things humorous under the thin disguise of McNeery, and it is said that he complained to the editor of the "Evening Post". The result was the creation of that far-famed individual, Mr. Dooley.

Mr. Dooley first came into prominence in American life at the time of the Spanish-American War, when his comments on the various phases of that expedition made the country and Admiral George Dewey explode with laughter. Mr. Dooley said very little about the World War, however, because that conflict was rather too important and too stern for him. Besides, his creator, Mr. Dunne, was too busy directing the publicity of the War Savings Stamps Campaign to be able to act as ventriloquist to the old man of Arr-chey Road. In his book "Mr. Dooley on Making a Will and Other Necessary Evils" Mr. Dunne has one paper called "On Food in War", which was written before America entered the conflict. His

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comments on a war of starvation are interesting.

When "Mr. Dooley in Peace and in War"—Dunne's first collection of his newspaper Dooley articles on the Spanish-American War and allied subjects—appeared in this country it sold an edition of ten thousand copies each month for the first six months. It was so popular that several firms of British publishers immediately pirated the book, and it sold widely in Great Britain and her colonies, the English reviewers acclaiming its author as a new Artemus Ward. In 1899 Dunne went to London with his American publisher, to settle with the London publishers of Mr. Dooley. They were able to bring about a settlement. But Dunne had his fun out of the incident. In the second Dooley book, "Mr. Dooley in the Hearts of His Countrymen", he dedicates the book:

To
Sir George Newnes, Bart.
Messrs. George Routledge & Sons
Limited
And Other Publishers Who Uninvited, Presented
Mr. Dooley to a Part of the British Public

This second book was even more popular than "Mr. Dooley in Peace and in War", for with that first offering, Mr. Dooley had certainly won his way into the hearts of his countrymen.

Mr. Dunne's art consists in taking a national trait which the nation concerned recognizes as such, and developing the humor of that trait to the nth power—but in such a way that the reader never for a moment loses the impression that what he is saying is absolutely true fundamentally. A remarkable feature of all the Dooley books is their lasting quality. Reading everything that Mr. Dunne makes Mr. Dooley say is an experience rather like overeating, but the incidents after many years still retain their flavor.

There is so much quotable in the eight published volumes of Mr. Dooley that one cannot begin to select the best. It is easy to find an illustration of almost any phase of American or European life in Mr. Dooley's talks. His versatility is astounding; he discusses everything from Arctic explorations to criminal trials.

Mr. Dunne does not bite the end of a pencil with a view to producing a maxim and publishing it with a capital *M*. The wit rolls off quickly, spontaneously, continuously. Any historian who is an historian according to the definitions in "Observations of Mr. Dooley" will use Dooley as the most complete available background of the politics and affairs of the last twenty years. Says Mr. Dooley:

"I know histhry isn't thrue, Hinnessy, because it ain't like what I see ivry day in Halsted Sthreet. If any wan comes along with a histhry iv Greece or Rome that'll show me th' people fightin', gettin' dhrunk, makin' love, gettin' married, owin' th' grocery man an bein' without hard-coal, I'll believe they was a Greece or Rome, but not befure. Historyans is like doctors. They are always lookin' f'r symptoms. Those iv them that writes about their own times examines th' tongue an' feels th' pulse an' makes a wrong dygnosis. Th' other kind iv histhry is a post-morten examination. It tells ye what a counthry died iv. But I'd like to know what it lived iv."

Mr. Dooley's observations are valuable because they are as true many years after, applied to a different set of incidents, as they were when Dunne wrote them for a particular purpose. For example, in his latest book he talks "On the Power of Music" in relation to William J. Bryan's love of oratory and international peace:

"Ye see, me boy, th' wurruld is a pretty old hunk of mud an' wickedness, an' I've been here a long time an' I've observed this sad thruth. Ye don't have to lend a man money. Ye don't have to amuse him; ye don't have to take care iv him if he's sick; ye don't have to do annything f'r him but wan thing."

"An' what's that?" asked Mr. Hennessy.

"If he wants to fight ye, ye've got to accommodate him," said Mr. Dooley.

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There is an analysis of Theodore Roosevelt:

"Whin he (Roosevelt) does anny talkin'—which he sometimes does—he talks at th' man in front iv him. Ye don't hear him hollerin' at posterity. Posterity don't begin to vote till afther th' polls close."

Mr. Dooley on Shakespeare and reading in general is interesting and keen:

"Hardly a day passes but some lady frind iv mine stops me on me way to catch a car, an' asks me if I don't regard Morse Hewlett as th' gr-reatest an' mos' homicidal writer iv our time, an' what I've got to say about Hinnelly's attack on Stevenson. 'Madam' says I, 'I wud n't know Morse if I was to see him goin' down th' sthreet ax in hand, an' as f'r Hinnelly, his name escapes me, though his language is familiar to anny wan who iver helped load a scow. Stevenson,' I says, 'doesn't appeal to me, an' if he shud, I'll revarse th' decision on th' ground iv' bad prevyous charackter iv th' plaintiff, while,' I says, 'admittin' th' thruth iv what he said. But,' says I, 'th' on'y books in me libr'y is th' Bible an' Shakespeare,' says I. 'I use thim f'r purposes iv definse. I have niver read thim, but I'll niver read annything else till I have read thim,' I says. 'They shtand between me an' all modrhen lithrachoor,' says I. 'I've built thim up into a kind iv breakwater,' I says, 'an' I set behind it ca'm an' contint while Hall Caine rages without,' says I."

Mr. Dooley remarks apropos of Carnegie's libraries: "Ye bet he didn't larn how to make steel billets out iv 'Whin Knighthood was in Flower'." But his perfect observation on the effects of reading and the causes of it is:

"Readin', me frind, is talked about be all readin' people as though it was th' on'y thing that makes a man better thin his neighbors. But th' thruth is that readin' is the nex' thing this side iv goin' to bed f'r restin' th' mind. With mos' people it takes th' place iv wurruk. A man doesn't think whin he's readin', or, if he has to, th' book is no fun. Did ye iver have something to do that ye ought to do, but didn't want to, an' while ye was wishin' ye was dead, did ye happen to pick up a newspaper? Ye know what occurred. Ye didn't jus' skim through th' spoortin' intillygince an' th' crime news. Whin ye got through with thim, ye read th' other quarther iv th' pa-aper. Ye read about people ye niver heerd iv, an' happenin's ye didn't undershtand—th' fashion notes, th' theatrical gossip, th' s'ciety news fr'm Peoria, th' quotations on oats, th' curb market, th' rale-estate transfers, th' marredge licenses, th' death notices, th' want ads, th' dhrygoods bargains, an' even th' iditoryals. Thin ye r-read thim over again, with a faint idee ye'd read thim befure. Thin ye yawned, studied th 'design iv th' carpet, an' settled down to wurruk. Was ye exercisin' ye-er joynt intelleck while ye was readin'? No more thin if ye'd been whistlin' or writin' ye-er name on a pa-aper. If anny wan else but me come along they might say: 'What a mind Hinnissy has! He's always readin'.' But I wud kick th 'book or pa-aper out iv ye'er hand, an' grab ye be th' collar, an' cry, 'Up, Hinnissy, an' to wurruk!' f'r I'd know ye were loafin'. Believe me, Hinnissy, readin' is not thinkin'. It seems like it, an' whin it comes out in talk sometimes, it sounds like it. It's a kind iv nearthought that looks ginooine to th' thoughtless, but ye can't get annything on it. Manny a man I've knowed has so doped himsilf with books that he'd stumble over a carpet-tack."

A book of definitions compiled from the observations of Mr. Dooley would be one of the most accurate dictionaries of human relations ever published. Here are two samples: "Th' interest iv capital an' labor is th' same, wan thryin' to make capital out iv labor an' th' other thryin' to make laborin' men out iv capitalists". Anarchists: "They don't want annything, that's what they want. They want peace on earth an' th' way they propose to get it is be murdhrin' ivry man that don't agree with thim. They think we all shud do as they please."

Mr. Dooley on the Dreyfus case is so uniformly entertaining that it is impossible to quote samples. But as well as entertaining the reader, Mr. Dunne knows how to tell a real short story, by means of Mr. Dooley. "Shaughnessy" in "Mr. Dooley in the Hearts of His Countrymen" is an example and there are others throughout the eight volumes.

In conclusion we may take Mr. Dooley's own estimate of his character.

"D'ye know I'd like to be an iditor," said Mr. Dooley.

"It must be a hard job," said Mr. Hennessy. "Ye have to know so much."

"'T is a hard job," said Mr. Dooley, "but 't is a fascinatin' wan. They'se nawthin' so hard

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as mindin' ye-er own business an' an iditor nivir has to do that. He's like mesilf. I'm sick iv' th' perpetchool round iv examinin' th' beer pump an' countin' up th' receipts. I want to put on me hat an' go out an' take a peek at th' neighborhood. How's Clancy gettin' on with his wife? Is it thrue she hates him? How's Schwartzmeister's business? Whin is Flannigan goin' to paint his barn? Afther I get through with me investigations I come back here an' give ye me opinyion on th' topics iv th' day. Be hivens, I am an iditor in me way. All I need is a cover iv a yellow man hittin' a blue goluf ball with a green shtick to be wan iv th' gr-reatest newspapers th' wurruld iver see. An' if it wasn't f'r th' likes iv ye, I wudden't be alive. Ye're me circulation. Ye're small, Hinnissy, but ye're silict. Ye want to know what's goin' on an' ye want some wan to make up ye'er mind about it an' I give ye th' ivints iv th' day an' tell ye what they all mane."

The only reason why Finley Peter Dunne has not gone down hill in his humor is because he seems to take periodic rests from the strenuousness of making Mr. Dooley our national character. We have not seen him much in recent years. Let us hope that his creator is taking a good rest but a short one.

SHAKESPEARE?

BY EDWIN BJÖRKMAN

SUPPOSE you used to know a lad out in Keokuk, Iowa, say, whose folks were pretty well off as things go in a small town, and of some importance locally. The lad himself was rather bright, although he never carried it far enough to become the valedictorian at a high school commencement. Whatever chances he had as a scholar, however, were spoiled by a sudden marriage to a woman eight years his senior, under circumstances indicating a certain lack of free choice on his part. He was only eighteen at the time, and when the first kid came a few months after the wedding, many people did not know whether to put the blame on him or on the woman. A couple of years later he disappeared quietly, and there were those who thought the place well rid of him, particularly because his exit was generally connected with the simultaneous departure of a traveling theatrical company. Some time afterward it was whispered about that the lad had become head usher, or something of that kind, at one of the leading New York theatres, and that he was sending home money to his family.

Suppose further that, only four or five years later, you caught sight of the selfsame lad on Broadway, looking all tailor-made and grand. Questioning one who ought to know, you were told that he was part owner of the Belasco theatre, that his acting compared favorably with that of any Barrymore, that he had just touched up an old Clyde Fitch play so that everybody was crazy about it, and that, finally, he had had four or five big plays of his own produced and would publish them as soon as their "runs" ceased.

Would you quarrel with any one for looking skeptical in the face of such a story? It is the very story we have

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been told about Shakespeare these last three hundred years.

Unlike many others, I am not prepared to declare it intrinsically impossible. One never knows what genius may do. And those were remarkable days, full of remarkable men that seemed to set at naught all the rules of ordinary life. Think only of Kit Marlowe of "the mighty line". He was not yet twenty-three when he completed the two parts of his "Tamburlaine the Great". He died at twenty-nine, leaving behind a body of work comparing favorably with what is usually claimed as Shakespeare's at about the same age. And he was only a shoemaker's son. To be sure, he did not marry at eighteen, and he had a university education, but that is about the only difference. Yet no one has ever questioned the authorship of the plays published as Marlowe's, though only two or three of them seem to have been printed before his death.

The Encyclopædia Britannica tells us that we had reached the middle of the last century before any one dared to suggest that Shakespeare had not written his own plays. The fact is, however, that some sort of mystery has been connected with the authorship of those plays ever since the days when Shakespeare still lived. Plays now ascribed to him were published piratically without any known protest on his part, while other plays, not his at all, were wrongfully published in his name with the same negative result. Take the books of an orthodox Shakespearian scholar like Charles Knight, for instance, who wrote before any Baconian cryptogram or acrosticon had yet upset the temper of the learned world. Right through his biography and his "Studies of Shakespeare", he takes up a defensive position on behalf of the Bard. Why should such a position be required? No one seems to think it necessary to assume a similar attitude when dealing with Marlowe or Jonson or Francis Beaumont. Yet Shakespeare was greater than all the rest, and to prove that his own contemporaries thought so, we are told what Francis Meres said about him in his "Wit's Treasure" in 1598. But in the very same work the same man spoke of Ben Jonson as "one of our best in tragedy", although we are not aware of any tragedy completed by Jonson up to that time.

Let us return to the lad from Keokuk for another minute. Suppose that, after you had hesitatingly swallowed the wonderful story of his rise and dramatic achievements, some new informer came with a whispered tale about a silent literary partnership with an eccentric man of wealth and high birth, whereby the lad got the whole glory of their common labors, while the man behind was enabled to work in freedom without being annoyed by his many enemies. Would you not be rather inclined to think this latter story quite plausible? And if someone should tell you on hearing it, that such a partnership could never be kept secret for any length of time—well, do you recall the story of William Sharp, who kept the identity of "Fiona Macleod" completely hidden for eleven long years, or until it was revealed by his widow after his death in 1905? Make one more supposition: that Mrs. Sharp had not given the story of her husband's dual authorship to the world, and that some literary student had got fragmentary proofs of it years after her death. What do you think would have happened? Do you think that the identity of William Sharp and "Fiona Mac-

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leod" had ever become generally accepted under such circumstances?

Applying this analogy to the case of Shakespeare, the defenders of the orthodox view will again retort with a volley of contemporary references to Shakespeare, forgetting that in almost every instance, as far as I can make out, such references were aimed at the work rather than the man. Men like Barnfield and Davies and Weever and Freeman spoke of the author of the poems and the plays just as I am likely at any time to speak of Anatole France, whom I have never had the privilege of meeting in the flesh, but whose existence as an author I take for granted on the basis of the specimens of his work found on my shelves. If another man of higher position stood behind Shakespeare, either as collaborator or as sole author, and if that man earnestly wished not to be known, then the possibility of his unknown presence cannot be explained away by any number of open mentionings of the man whose name he was deliberately using. And if you believe it impossible for a man to take such an attitude in regard to his own work, you have only to turn about and observe the absolute indifference displayed by Shakespeare himself toward the work reputed to be his.

What I have just said implies no conclusion on my part either in regard to the authorship of the Shakespearian plays or in regard to the theory now advanced by Mr. Looney. What I believe quite humbly, and have believed for years, is that certain mysterious circumstances attach to the reputed authorship of those plays, and that the problem—or rather group of problems—involved will continue to challenge every open-minded student of English literature until it is settled by some discovery of documents or facts hitherto unknown. For this reason I hold that every sincere effort like that of Mr. Looney's must be welcomed, not as a proof of what cannot be proved by mere reasoning, but as a starting point for new, and maybe more fruitful research. There is nothing sacrilegious about such an attitude. Those who protest in horror are, as a rule, protesting unconsciously on behalf of the personality read out of the plays rather than on behalf of the man whose name appears on the title pages. There has been far too much idolatry practised in the name of Shakespeare, and the problems connected with his real or reputed achievements have been additionally obscured by it. Generations of scholars have striven stubbornly to fit the works into the Procrustean bed furnished by the miserable store of available biographical and chronological facts. Texts have been read and references construed with a wholly one-sided reference to their favorable or unfavorable bearing on the established ideas about the man behind the works. Yet innumerable people of the highest critical acumen seem, from the very start, to have been troubled by a sense of hopeless conflict between the impression of stolidity and thrift conveyed by the Stratford actor, and the passionate aspiration and flaming fancy of the soul seen through the plays and the poems.

The effort of Mr. Looney to solve this conflict is a little unfortunate in some respects, though most interesting in many others. A schoolmaster by profession, he is inclined to speak like one. A discoverer in fields where many have toiled in vain, he has the fanaticism of a man thinking himself possessed of a new truth. A palpable sufferer of what the psychoanalysts call a "self-assertion complex", he

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must needs make enemies for his own cause by presenting it as aggressively as possible. Claiming to be a scientist and deploring the absence of the true scientific spirit in literary men, he fails utterly to grasp the modest caution that prevented a Darwin from dogmatic formulation of the theories later named after him. All this is the more to be regretted because so much of the objectionable matter appears at the beginning of the book, where it is most likely to repel a sensitive or prejudiced reader. This granted, however, there remains for the more patient a body of documentary revelation and literary conjecture that cannot fail to set open minds thinking very seriously.

The man on whom Mr. Looney wants to bestow the laurels so long held by Shakespeare is Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford. An air of romance and mystery has always surrounded the figure of him who was generally recognized as the foremost noble of Elizabeth's illustrious court. "An uplifted shadow lies across his memory," wrote Dr. A. B. Grosart who, in the seventies, collected and published the small group of poems constituting the only work authoritatively assigned to Oxford. The biographical material at our disposal is extremely scant and generally discolored by open or veiled sneers. Yet this very man was known to his contemporaries as a poet and playwright of unusual gifts. Mr. Looney quotes among others Puttenham (one of two brothers—George or Richard—we don't know which) as saying, in his "The Arte of English Poesie" (1589), that the Earl of Oxford "deserves the highest praise for comedy and interlude". Quoting him at second-hand, from Sir Sidney Lee's article in the Dictionary of National Biography, Mr. Looney has failed to discover another passage in the same work that suggests the very policy of disguise which forms a part of his own theory:

"And in her Maiesties time that now is are sprong up an other crew of Courtly makers Noble men and Gentlemen of her Maiesties own servantes, who have written excellently well as it would appeare if their doings could be found out and made publicke with the rest, of which number is first that noble Gentleman Edward Earle of Oxford." (Chapter XXXI; page 75; English Reprints edited by Edward Arber; London, 1869.)

What put Mr. Looney on the track of his particular candidate for Shakespearian honors was the discovery that out of twenty-two poems known to be the work of Oxford, and known in most cases to have been produced before 1576, not less than seven are made up of stanzas identical in metre and rhyming scheme with those made familiar to the whole world by the poem of "Venus and Adonis". Starting from this point, Mr. Looney found, or thought he found, an unmistakable correspondence between the style and spirit of the acknowledged Oxford poems and the earlier works of Shakespeare. Thus he was led into a detailed study of the life of Oxford, and it was in this manner he brought to light facts that call for our serious attention.

The life and character of Oxford, as revealed not only by the few biographies, but also by the "Hatfield Manuscripts" and the "Calendars of State Papers", fit most remarkably with the image distilled out of the plays. It would seem, too, that not a single fact out of Oxford's life as now known to us has escaped use in the plays. He was an aristrocrat to the finger tips, a rather free-thinking

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sympathizer with the old religion, and a Lancastrian by heredity—and so appears the man who wrote the plays. Oxford worshiped his father, who died when the boy was twelve. His mother remarried not long after, and her new husband took up his abode at the palace which had been particularly dear to the older Oxford. Here we have the familiar situation from "Hamlet". The young Oxford became a ward of the Crown—as was Bertram in "All's Well". As such he was placed in care of Lord Burghley, then still Sir William Cecil, whose portrait as drawn by Macaulay tallies in the minutest details with that of Polonius—even to the point of sending spies to watch his son on a visit made by the latter to Paris. At twenty-one Oxford married the daughter of Lord Burghley, Anne Cecil, who was then fourteen—like Juliet (which facts have already been used on behalf of Bacon, who was a nephew of Burghley, who liked him as little as did Oxford and who, by the by, must have been thoroughly familiar with Oxford's private life).

More striking coincidences follow. While abroad, the Earl was warned by a retainer—Iago—about the behavior of his wife. When recalled by Lord Burghley, he suspected his wife of being responsible for it, just as Othello suspected Desdemona. Being anxious to arrange a reconciliation and finding himself balked by Oxford's stubborn reserve, Lord Burghley finally cooked up a plot by which the Earl was lured into sleeping with his own wife without being aware of her identity—just as Bertram is reconciled with Helena. While in Italy, Oxford wrote a letter home in which he mentions a wealthy Paduan, Baptista Nigrone, from whom he had had to borrow five hundred crowns. In the same letter he mentions another Italian, Benedict Spinola. The father of Katherine in "The Taming of the Shrew" is named Baptista Minola, and it is practically the only Italian play where Shakespeare speaks of crowns instead of ducats. In later years Oxford was a close friend of the young Southampton, to whom the "Venus and Adonis" and "The Rape of Lucrece" are dedicated. It was proposed that Southampton should marry Oxford's eldest daughter, and the Earl was very much in favor of it—which brings into our minds the first seventeen of the sonnets. Like Hamlet and the Lord in the "Induction" to "The Taming of the Shrew", Oxford was intensely interested in stagecraft. He had a company of players named popularly the "Oxford Boys". He wrote and produced plays of his own. He associated with actors and literary men on such familiar terms that his father-in-law accused him of having been "enticed away by lewd persons". Above everything else, however, he was proud, passionate, generous, witty, eccentric, and given to melancholy—just as we would expect the writer of the Shakespearian plays and poems to be.

It is impossible in an article like this to do justice to the wealth of evidence collected by Mr. Looney, or to the ingenuity displayed by him in its coordination. Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of his labors is that they affect not only the central problem of William Shakespeare's relation to the work named after him, but a whole series of literary enigmas that have puzzled every painstaking student of this period for nearly two hundred years. There is the problem of the lyrics excluded from the plays of John Lyly, author of "Euphues" and private secretary to Oxford, on their

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first publication—one of which is practically identical with one of the lyrics in "A Midsummer Night's Dream". There is the problem of the shepherd Willie in Edmund Spenser's "The Shepheard's Calendar" (1579) and "Teares of the Muses" (1590). And so on. The peculiar thing is that all these problems seem to fall into place and form a consistent picture the moment you accept the theory of Oxford's connection with the Shakespearian plays.

Mr. Looney thinks he has proved this theory. Of course, he has not. But he has opened most promising vistas, and it is to be hoped that his leads will be followed up. The days are past when a new Shakespearian theory can be laughed out of court. And the days should be past when all the facts bearing on such theories are studied with a single aim in view. In this as in all other cases, we should be moved solely by a desire for truth, and nothing that may be helpful in finding it should be despised.

"Shakespeare" Identified in Edward de Vere, The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford. By J. Thomas Looney. Frederick A. Stokes Co.

A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

DEAD OR ALIVE

By Theodore Maynard

IT ought to be a salutary reminder of mortality to every famous personage to know that every well-regulated periodical has his biography prepared against the day of his death. Those winding-sheets of paper lie neatly folded in their pigeonholes ready for instant use. A man is valued according to the amount of copy that is written about him. Generally the biographer will allow a decent interval to elapse; but so great is our human curiosity that we grow impatient at times and seek to catch our celebrity dead or alive. There is a price upon his head.

Of two recent books of personal criticism, that written by Horace G. Hutchinson follows the older method of allowing a fair interim between the death and the discussion of his subject; that written by E. T. Raymond frankly professes to concern itself only with such people as are of present public interest. Many of his people, of course, will not be remembered very long; but they are being talked about now. Consequently Mr. Raymond is willing to barter any two birds of permanence in the bush for the piquant bird he has in his hand.

Mr. Hutchinson's collection of studies "Portraits of the Eighties" is the acknowledged sequel to G. W. E. Russell's "Portraits of the Seventies", just as that volume was the acknowledged sequel to Justin McCarthy's "Portraits of the Sixties". And Mr. Hutchinson is able to emphasize the continuity of the series by beginning with a chapter on Mr. Russell, in imitation of Mr. Russell himself who began his book by a portrait of his forerunner, Mr. McCarthy.

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A certain amount of overlapping is inevitable. Gladstone and Disraeli, Chamberlain and Parnell, among others, reappear several times; and the latest gleaner in the field has found that former harvesters have thinned it considerably. Nevertheless, I cannot feel that Mr. Hutchinson would have done much better under far more favorable circumstances. He is sensible and he has taken pains. But he lacks the charm of Russell or McCarthy; and he writes (or gives the reader the impression of writing) from the *outside* of his subject, whereas his fellow biographers wrote with evident *inside* information. Mr. Russell was always exquisitely discreet. He managed the difficult trick of being confidential without breaking confidences. But Mr. Hutchinson, though he announces his desire not to "administer shocks to persons still alive", has, I suspect, very little shocking material at his command.

I would not go so far as to say that "Portraits of the Eighties" are daubs. They are pleasing designs in the conventional style quite competently executed. The book is full of important facts brought together in an accessible form. But Mr. Hutchinson has little penetration and suffers in any comparison that is drawn between his work, which may be admitted to be good, and the work which is entitled to be called excellent of some recent writers.

To take a definite point at which it may be compared with the most brilliant of contemporary biographers, Lytton Strachey, let us select the Gordon of "The Eighties" and the Gordon of "Eminent Victorians". In Mr. Strachey's hands the strangest of all evangelicals, with his open Bible and his open handy bottle, becomes vividly alive. And the combined hesitation and intrigue by means of which Gordon was sent to his death are unraveled with the most masterly irony. Mr. Hutchinson, however, in touching the same theme, fumbles. On page 89 he tells us, correctly enough, that Gordon, being the man he was, believed that a special intervention of Providence would occur. "It is quite impossible", he adds, "to think that the British Government believed it; nevertheless it sent him out." But ten pages later he weakly admits, "After all it is not wholly impossible that there were those in the Cabinet who believed that Gordon might be granted a peculiar portion of the divine help." Now this is not ordinary inconsistency —which is a perfectly pardonable thing. It is helpless wavering on the very centre of his argument, and serves not to illuminate Gordon or Gladstone or Hartington or Cromer but merely to show that Mr. Hutchinson is incapable of making up his mind.

If the author of "Portraits of the Eighties" is afraid of conclusions and generalizations, the author of "All and Sundry" is afraid of neither. The only fear he betrays is the fear of being dull. The only model he follows is that set up in his earlier "Uncensored Celebrities". He is at all times original, even to the degree of whimsicality; and he makes his effects by means of paradox and epigrams. Mr. Raymond's desire to be striking may have its disadvantages; it hardly leads, for instance, to historical impartiality; but it enables him to make everything he touches intensely interesting.

I have said that E. T. Raymond is "original". So he is in the mode of presenting his theme. Apart from his amusing literary tricks, however, there is not much in what he has to

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say. His philosophy is derived from Carlyle, his wit is on the Chesterton model, and his information is culled from the newspapers. These elements are fused together into an alloy that at first glance appears to be a new metal. There is no reason why we should examine it more closely.

Mr. Raymond is delicately impudent in his sketches of "All and Sundry"; and it is this light irreverence that is his chief attraction. He never says a really bitter thing, even where he should say it; but on the other hand he never stints his banter. Nobody could be offended or fail to be entertained by it—not even those who squirm under it; for Raymond's humor is invariably good-humored.

I can best illustrate his method by examples. Dean Inge's face, he says, is that "of a quiet fanatic whose main trouble is that he has nothing very obvious to be fanatical about". And Herbert Samuel "moves towards his object with a sort of inexorable gentleness, as of a Juggernaut car fitted with pneumatic tyres". Comments in the same vein are offered upon President Wilson, Rudyard Kipling (the one man of his group Mr. Raymond comes nearest to disliking), Conan Doyle, Harold Begbie, and T. P. O'Connor. Unqualified or almost unqualified praise is reserved for the two Frenchmen in "All and Sundry", Clemenceau and Foch. But whether in praise or persiflage the book is highly readable.

It is a pity that Neville Chamberlain was not included as one of Mr. Raymond's subjects. A good deal of fun could have been extracted out of the widely advertised and inefficient Minister of National Service. I cannot refrain from retailing a mot that a man I knew went round repeating in the London clubs. It seems to me to sum up bureaucratic futility. "Neville Chamberlain", he was wont to say gravely, "may take a long time before he is able to make the wrong decision —but he makes it in the end!"

Portraits of the Eighties. By Horace G. Hutchinson. Charles Scribner's Sons.
All and Sundry. By E. T. Raymond. Henry Holt and Co.

FOLK AND NATURE VIGNETTES

By Walter Prichard Eaton

HUDSON'S "Adventures Among Birds" has been issued newly and rather dubiously adorned with reproductions of the wood-cuts in Bewick's "British Birds". Not having been recut by some competent engraver, and being printed on paper unsuited to the purpose, the effect is something of a libel on Bewick. We should best like to see this lovely and gentle book of Hudson's illustrated with scenes from the countryside through which he wandered, drawn after the manner, let us say, of Edmund New. Though styled adventures among birds, the work in reality is a record of adventures among men and women, children and trees, green hedgerows and sedgy marshes, wild hills and rich valleys, with a kind of bird-song obligato. Hudson is a trifle sentimental about bird music, to be sure; or shall we say that he does not quite possess the sharp, definite, apt phrasing of Thoreau to relieve his praises from the suggestion of sentimentality? About folks, however, he has more to say than Thoreau ever did, and such vignettes as that of the workman's family with whom he boarded in Hampshire have the clear simplicity and profound human sympathy of the

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finest art. Fine, too, is his indignation at the British game-keepers (and the game-keepers' employers) who slaughter every kind of bird in order —supposedly—to "protect" the pheasants. He even tells of one keeper who killed the nightingales because they kept the pheasants awake! We may have much to learn from England, but it certainly is not about game laws. No man's property is his own, to kill what he pleases upon, in America. He has to respect the general welfare, thank God.

But perhaps the most delightful part of Hudson's book—as it has been of other books he has written—is that in which he gathers up various authenticated anecdotes of bird and animal behavior. Done, to be sure, with a scientific purpose, his literary art and his profound love for all wild creatures make of each anecdote something as unlike a scientific illustration as a Rembrandt etching is unlike an engineer's diagram. The chapter on bird and animal friendships is as entertaining as it is astonishing. It is here that he tells of the lonesome swan, who finally made a companion of a big trout, and flew out of the pond and savagely attacked the man who caught the fish. With this tale he, quite wisely, closes the chapter. There are limits to a layman's belief.

Adventures Among Birds. By W. H. Hudson. E. P. Dutton and Co.

A VOYAGE TOWARD REALITY

By Ruth Murray Underhill

THE term *realism* has gathered a depressing sense. Unjustly our minds connect it with accuracy about the less welcome facts of life, pictures of dulness or brutality. Yet we admit reality to be miraculous. To eyes not so jaded as ours, the spectacle of human beings against their background of æons and planets would be absorbing, entry into the mind of one such being, even at his dullest moment, a stupendous adventure.

Such eyes Virginia Woolf has, toward such an adventure she leads us in her two novels "The Voyage Out" and "Night and Day" (the latter forthcoming). These are stories of pleasant people, who move quietly through a quiet environment. Yet they are to be read breathlessly. The curious fabric of minute-by-minute daily life, compound of emotion, sensation, thoughts half seized, actions half intended, becomes in these pages almost tangible. The half uttered sentence, the impulse poignant and inexplicable, go to the very roots of our remembrance and produce a thrill of revelation. This is true.

The plot of each story is simple, for it is not outward events that, to Mrs. Woolf, make history. In "The Voyage Out" a young girl makes her entry into the world outside the secluded home of her maiden aunts. But she is not plunged straight into a treasure mystery nor into the chase of a criminal. She sails on her father's ship, with some clever and well-bred people, to South America and, very slowly, through their agency and that of the others she meets at Santa Marina, she reaches some understanding of the nature of human beings and of love. "Night and Day" has an even simpler motive. A nice girl tries to find her way, among a group of pleasant and cultured people containing two young men, toward the reality of love.

The very young heroine is, at present, regnant in fiction. She may be seen every month, directing a whole

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staff of detectives or rescuing the business of her father or lover from ruin, always with perfect self-possession and knowledge of what she wants. Mrs. Woolf's girls are not of that breed: they are people, in all the ignorance and fallibility that the term implies. They do not know what they want, but they go out to look for it.

To the reviewer, the opportunity to read about people who are real, but intelligent, is an unusual delight. These people employ self-control and common sense, even as you and I, and the plot proceeds without misunderstanding or murder. It is no psychological disquisition; it is profoundly moving. But, given Mrs. Woolf's perspective, it is not the conventionally emotional scenes by which one is stirred,—it is rather those reminiscent and elusive moments when both heroine and reader palpitate at the approach to truth.

The aura of magnificence about the adventure is perhaps greater in "The Voyage Out" than in "Night and Day". The splendor of the ocean and of the clear-cut southern scenery lends a perspective to the faltering human action which London cannot supply. The half expressed thought, the interrupted sentences by which the action of "Night and Day" proceeds, are baffling. Carry this sort of thing a few steps further and you have Maeterlinck. Yet even this intent study of a fragmentary and delicate thing strikes one as in the spirit of Tennyson's "flower in the crannied wall" whose complete comprehension means comprehension of what God and man is.

The Voyage Out; Night and Day. By Virginia Woolf. George H. Doran Company.

AGRICULTURAL PREDICAMENTS

By Walter A. Dyer

BEING an amateur farmer myself, I suspect Judge Shute, the original Plupy and author of "The Real Diary of a Real Boy", etc., of not being a farmer at all. He finds too much that is funny in the occupation. He may indeed have got him a cow and a sheep and a couple of pigs, but I think I perceive evidence of his having acquired them as much for literary purposes as for any more practical end. If they had cut up as much as he says they did he would have ceased being an agriculturist before the end of the first month. There is nothing intrinsically funny, I submit, in being a farmer. Other people may think so, but not the farmer himself. Hence the doubtful veracity of this diary.

I can well remember the day when my old cow Matilda and her fastidious daughter Nancy saw fit to stray off into the orchard instead of into their paddock. It was before mowing time and the grass was tall. Also it was very wet, for we had had rain. For some reason which the scientists may be able to explain, cows are always particularly wayward on wet days. I had been to town and was not dressed for the part I was called upon to play. It was most distressing to me. I could not possibly write a humorous account of what followed. That it must have been very funny I have no doubt, for neighbor Page nearly died of laughter and still refers to the occurrence with unseemly hilarity, invariably remarking, between gasps, "And he had his white pants on!"

Again do I recall the time when said neighbor Page's bees swarmed on the crab-apple tree. Father got a bee

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down his neck, daughter got one elsewhere, son had a lump as big as an egg under one eye, and the dog had convulsions in the flower bed. This seemed to me at the time and still seems deliriously funny, but neighbor Page did not view it in that light. He would not have mentioned it in his diary, if he had one—and real farmers never do—with the slightest hint of humor.

The predicaments incident to farming and the raising of live stock cannot possibly seem funny to the farmer himself, and Judge Shute has written a book that is reasonably funny all through, and very funny in spots. As a jurist he must admit that the evidence is against him.

I suspected that the book would be of this sort, and I doubted whether I should laugh very much over it. When the cow has kicked over the milk pail once, and the pigs have got into the cabbages once, and the sheep has butted someone once, there seems little more to be said. But Judge Shute has kept up that sort of thing for 277 pages. I don't see how he did it. And I don't see why I should have found it so funny, in view of my prejudices. But I did, I must candidly admit. After the cow had led him a chase through the woods I knew perfectly well that in a day or two the pigs would lead him a chase through the neighborhood. And yet I laughed. And I think you will. Better try it and see.

The book isn't all about farming. I really believe Judge Shute is funnier as a lawyer than as a farmer, or when appearing in a dress suit in Boston, or—most delicious entry of all—when riding to business in a hack the horses of which were destined to respond to a fire alarm. And there is a friendliness permeating the book, too—the quiet atmosphere of the town of Exeter, New Hampshire, and a nature lover's observations of bird life.

Professionally I am inclined to condemn the book as a piece of deliberate manufacture by a man who knows too well that he is expected to be funny; personally I like it very well indeed. If this be inconsistency, make the most of it.

The Real Diary of the Worst Farmer. By Henry A. Shute. Houghton Mifflin Co.

LOG OF A SPIRITUAL VOYAGE

By Joseph Wood Krutch

LEAVING Oxford was the most nearly dramatic thing that Arthur Hugh Clough ever did. This fact explains, perhaps, why he has, up to the present, lacked a biographer. But he has a story—the story of a soul perplexed in the extreme but faithful to the end. His spirit was a spirit which, if it did not like Newton's voyage through strange seas of thought alone, at least groped its way through the fog banks which lay between Arnold's two worlds—the one dead, the other powerless to be born. The log of this voyage, which ended in no happy harbor, has been written lucidly and interestingly by J. I. Osborne in "Arthur Hugh Clough". He traces the spiritual progress of the pilgrim through the early insipidity of his Wordsworthianism, and through the disillusion of "Dipsychus", to the sterility of his last years and writes with a touch of that Olympian aloofness which has made Lytton Strachey famous.

From Rugby, Clough once wrote home: "There is a deal of evil springing up in the school, and it is to be feared that the tares will choke much

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of the wheat." Such a boy was surely in danger of becoming a prig. Indeed, he did become one, for he was nourished in an atmosphere where priggism was the ideal and was taught both through precept and example by the great Dr. Arnold, who called it Christian Character. But Clough recovered. For he who could so far give the devil his due as to allow the doubtful spirit of "Dipsychus' 'to sing persuasively:

> How pleasant it is to have money, Heigh-Ho
> How pleasant it is to have money,—

who could see that Duty, which he wished to follow, was often but an easy assumption of convention, and who could write a new decalogue beginning:

> Thou shalt have one God only, who
> Would be at the expense of two?
> No graven images shall be
> Worshipped except the currency,—

was no prig. There is a sting in Clough's religious verse that saves it from the namby-pamby, and it was the tragedy of his life that while he wished to pray with the faithful, his keen intelligence forced him to scoff with the scornful.

The theme of Mr. Osborne's book is this escape from priggism, and if he fails at all, it is in neglecting to present adequately the tragic as well as the comic side of Clough's perplexity. He was one of that unhappy band which the nineteenth century swept into unwilling rationalism. His was a spirit which longed for the certitude of faith, but his was also the spirit that must give the honest No. He wished to listen to the church chimes with honest rapture, but they only donged into his ears:

> Ting, ting. There is no God, ting, ting,
> Dong, there is no God; ding,
> There is no God; dong, dong.

We of this later age, born to the fruits of a struggle, often fail to realize what they cost. To us, it seems ridiculous that our forefathers should have been troubled because they felt a growing conviction that, say, all our difficulties had not been due to Adam's prank in robbing an orchard, but their heritage of faith was more inclusive than our heritage of doubt. All that men lived by, all that gave meaning to a perplexing world, was gone. In those trying times, when some who chose, first of all, the pleasure of certitude, drifted into Newmanism, others rejoiced in a new-found freedom; but Clough was one of the unhappy ones to whom the abolition of dogmatism brought no joy of freedom and left only the austere comfort of a resolution to follow the white star of truth and say:

> It fortifies my soul to know
> That, though I perish, Truth is so.

For him there was no way out. He was too pure in heart to accept the world's compromise and he was too little a pagan to be satisfied to be a mere poet, for only exceptional circumstances can make a moralist satisfied to be a verse writer. Milton wrote because he was past more active service, Wordsworth only because an enormous conceit convinced him of the unparalleled importance of his writings. With a bit less of vanity, his moral obsession would have driven him to the ministry at least. To Clough the obstinate questionings of his minor Faust, "Dipsychus", and the sad resolution to difference in "Qua Cursum Ventus", seemed only a prelude to a life work. Yet they are nearly first-rate poems, and the poems that are nearly first-rate are few. Modern taste looks askance at poetry on God and Duty and (vide the Hymnal) not without reason, but Clough's are good because they have passion. He loved

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God with an intensity which neither the atheist nor the cheap religionist to whom God is a sort of familiar relative can understand. He loved him with the torturing ardor of one who half believes that his mistress is false. But the fame of a minor place in anthologies would seem to him no excuse for a life. *Qui laborat orat,* was his creed. Yet he found no work to do. In the end he relapsed into errand running for Florence Nightingale. Probably he did not do it well. With more or less faith he would have been saved—in this world at least—but his was the damnation of the doubter.

Arthur Hugh Clough. By J. I. Osborne. Houghton Mifflin Co.

A STOREHOUSE OF YOUTH

By Eleanor Kilmer Sceva

THERE is in "Paths of June" not the usual "slender volume of verse", by the way—a remarkably complete representation of many moods and many admirations. Burges Johnson, in a paragraph on the jacket which combines introduction with commendation, writes: "A first book of poems has more in its favor than any first novel could ever have, for it will bring together all of those purely spontaneous expressions written in the years before exposure to life has built a shell of reserve." This is particularly applicable to Miss Stockbridge's first book. The poems are indicative of a youthfulness of spirit not suggesting callowness nor confusion of mind on the part of the author; nor is she ashamed to be gravely rhapsodic at times, "secure in a sense of the beauty of things", or equally wholesouled in denunciation of the ills of the world.

"The Fellowship of Poets", the first poem in the book, is written in a somewhat grand style, a rather dangerous feat were it not that Miss Stockbridge possesses both dignity and assurance of manner. "Masefield" is also a long poem. It is an impression of John Masefield, and of Masefield's England, salted with a wind from the sea and with a strain of balladry running through it. In addition to these are "The Eternal Exile", "O Centuries", "The Song of Balder", "To Rupert Brooke", "Poseidon of Many Moods",—each poem of several pages' duration.

It is, however, in the shorter poems full of the fleeting joys of gay youth living its brief hour among birds and flowers, thrilled into ecstasy by moonlight on a river or an apple-tree in blossom, that the spirit of the book lies hidden. The stray lines and phrases which make a poem and a poet are here in abundance, and in their frequence and beauty there is assurance of a true gift of poesy.

Paths of June. By Dorothy Stockbridge. E. P. Dutton and Co.

PALE BLUESTOCKINGS

By Martha Plaisted

THE Learned Lady in England, 1650-1760" is one of the books published in honor of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of Vassar College; and a more fitting tribute to a great modern institute of learning for women by one of its own alumnæ could hardly be offered. It is a relic of the early, groping attempts of the pre-

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Bluestocking to escape the tyranny of sentimental conventions; which no one, hitherto, has thought it worth while to bring together, and which Myra B. Reynolds, with incredible patience and effort, has arranged in such a way as to show a real development from the very occasional female prodigy of the Stuart régime—who expended her literary talents entirely for the pleasure and approbation of the men of her own family—to the Johnsonian woman of acknowledged ability, who demanded and achieved an appreciative public.

The amount of reading which Miss Reynolds must have gone through in seeking out the personalities of these so long dead and forgotten ladies is frightening to think of. For there is no index or catalogue of their names. It was necessary to pursue them through pages and pages of heterogeneous print—through ancient periodicals, through manuscripts, through family records, through pamphlets, even through tombstone epitaphs.

It was a discouraging task, and even at the end, the author admits no great success. There are no women of the century who can in any way compare with the eminent men, such as Dryden, Milton, Pope, Addison, Steele. The "Matchless Orinda", Mary Aspell, Margaret Blagge—who ever heard their names? Even Susanna Wesley and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu bring only faint flashes of recognition. But Miss Reynolds has put them all before us in their ridiculous muddle-headedness, their pretentious verbosity, their pathetic sincerity.

And from our contemplation of this dim, crowded gallery of ineffective shades, we turn away with certain clear ideas forming in our minds. We begin to see that these women, fluttering and disparate as they seem, actually moved with steady progress toward the goal of liberty of thought and action, which the women of today congratulate themselves on having almost reached.

For it was during this period that a profession was first opened to women, —acting. And it was at this time too that a woman first earned her living by her pen. This was Mrs. Aphra Behn, who discovered that the public will pay if you give them what they want. So she forsook the pious paths of her predecessors and began to compete with the men in writing comedies. She was very little behind them in wit and not at all in vulgarity; and she won success at the sacrifice of her reputation. Another real achievement was the awakening of women to the need of education. Schools were established in which it was possible for girls to learn something besides water-colors, japanning, needlework, and dancing. It was Mary Aspell who dreamed of the very college of Tennyson's "Princess". But perhaps the most important thing which comes out under Miss Reynolds's development is the change in the attitude of men toward the achievements of women. It is amusing to observe how the contemporary letters which the author quotes very freely, from being condescending, effusive, sultry, become sincere and almost fraternal.

In reading the book we cannot help missing the diverting gossip, the humorous malice which we are accustomed to look for in all discussions of eighteenth-century subjects. But Miss Reynolds has an end in view. It takes 465 pages to cover the facts and she has no space for parley. We suspect that her strong-mindedness is main-

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The Learned Lady in England, 1650-1760. By Myra B. Reynolds. Houghton Mifflin Co.

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tained at some personal sacrifice when she refers without comment to a book of orations by the youthful Duchess of Newcastle, containing a "speech for a half-drunk gentleman on a convivial occasion" and when she quotes passages about girls' "abbominable swearynge". But the book is quite long enough without any sidetracks. It is an interesting and original piece of work and covers ground that has hardly been touched before.

LOOKING AHEAD WITH THE PUBLISHERS

ONE of the popular superstitions is that publishers stop publishing during the summer and, like the Arab, fold up their presses and silently steal away to the country. Such may have been the case twenty years ago when the public's vacation meant going where neither news nor books dared to tread. But, fortunately, more people find each year that books will actually fit into the suitcase and, barring interference by the post office, they may even come by mail. Which brings me round to the diverse and interesting list of books scheduled for late July and August publication.

* * * *

Katharine Newlin Burt's "Hidden Creek" (Houghton Mifflin Company) came to me unbound,—capital shape for a book which three or more people want to read at the same time (only matters became confused when my wife insisted on jumping ahead to see what Sylvester's mysterious plan really was). The story did something to my long-dormant spirit of adventure, took it up, and sent it flying west to the land where the mountains are the highest, the air the clearest, and life the fullest of any spot on this earth. Three crowded hours of adventure, and one of them the wrong side of midnight! Miss Burt writes western romance de luxe. Looking back, the providential arrival of Hilliard just as the wolves close in on Sheila appears rather too good to be true, but at the time I was just as glad to hear his shots ring out as was the girl herself. And, while my recent dip into the school of English realism has taught me the futility of such procedure, perhaps in this case it isn't quite as improbable for the hero and heroine to fall in love after all.

* * * *

"Making Advertisements" by Roy Durstine (Charles Scribner's Sons) did not at first strike me as having much meat for general consumption. I find it has, however, inasmuch as it is a chatty review of the good and bad in advertising. There are some sound ideas for the man who is interested in this newest of professions—and who isn't? Mr. Dustine says:

> A few years ago it was common to hear a man boast that advertising had never sold him anything. Inquiry probably would have developed that he was awakened by a Big Ben, shaved himself with a Gillette, brushed his hair with a Prophylactic tooth brush, put on his B. V. D.'s, his Holeproofs, Regal shoes, E. & W. collar, Arrow shirt, and had Kellogg's corn flakes, Beechnut bacon, and Yuban coffee sweet-

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ened with Domino sugar for breakfast. And then—but why pursue him farther on his trade-marked way? Of course advertising never sold him anything!

He is somewhat unfair in his criticism of publishers' advertising. "Don't sell books, sell reading," he says. But I will wager my last piece of "copy" against the blurb on his book that if five months from now, Scribner's told him that the appropriation set aside for the advertising of his book had been swallowed up in a "Read More Books" campaign, he would be indignant. In competition with such campaigns as "Keep Clean—with Ivory Soap" "Keep Well—with Grape Nuts" the publisher must run a multiplicity of campaigns: "Understand Advertising—Read Roy Durstine's Book"; "Get a Working Knowledge of the Country's Economic Problems—Read Otto Kahn's Articles", and so on over the whole field of new books. And as for the author's suggestion to push old publications instead of continually bringing out new ones, would he have accepted that argument as the basis of a refusal to publish his? *Mais non, pas du tout, pas du tout!*

* * * *

Here is a book (published by Frederick A. Stokes Company) that should appeal to everyone who uses oil, from the owners of the oil burning "Imperator" to the housewife who puts "3 in 1" on the shuttle of the sewing-machine (or is it the shuttle?). It is the first information of a process by which oil may be obtained from oil-shale. "The Oil-Shale Industry" by Dr. Victor Alderson, President of the Colorado School of Mines, gives a careful review of the probable amount of crude oil remaining in the known fields, a discouraging lot of figures. According to Dr. Alderson the output of petroleum is now at its peak, with an ever increasing demand. On the other hand, the author cheers us with the news of an almost unlimited supply of oil in the surface oil-shale which covers many thousand square miles of the country, a shale which will produce about a barrel of oil to the ton. Dr. Alderson does not hold out hope of any material productivity from these fields in the near future, but at least the knowledge of such a reserve, —like the hidden last "quart"—gives one the feeling that all is not yet lost.

* * * *

Unfortunately "Birth Through Death, Ethics of the Twentieth Plane", as reported by Dr. Albert D. Watson through Louis Benjamin of Toronto, reached this office too late to be read. However, I can say that by all indications it should be read by those who know and follow the work of Sir Oliver Lodge, Conan Doyle, and the late Dr. Hyslop. As a matter of fact it was Dr. Watson who received through Mr. Benjamin, as medium, the first Hyslop message a short time ago. "Birth Through Death" (James A. McCann Company) is a departure from the usual psychic book, being entirely made up of statements and long messages from those "beyond". It will bring down a storm of criticism, for it has little to prove its authenticity.

* * * *

The statement by Governor Cox of Ohio that the Democratic campaign will be fought on the question of the League of Nations, has finally brought up a definite line of cleavage between the two parties, and it has brought to the front again that day-by-day house and office discussion, Shall or shall we not accept the League? In "American World Policies" Dr. David Jayne Hill thinks emphatically not. He says:

The problems of our national life have been solved, and successfully solved by our institutions. We cannot, therefore, wisely abandon or

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subordinate them. Our whole value to the rest of the world depends upon the unity, the efficiency, and the prestige which these institutions have given us.

Whether or not the election will prove that the majority of people agree with Dr. Hill, at least no one can deny his arguments are much to the point. My personal feeling is that every man, be he a platform or a breakfast-table orator, can add to his arguments or be forewarned of the arguments of his opponents by a careful investigation of Dr. Hill's work. I should suggest that George H. Doran Company, who will publish the book late this month, send copies to Senator Harding and Governor Cox for their own information and guidance.

—S. M. R.

THE GLORIOUS GAME

BY RICHARD BURTON

I GO about dumbfoundedly and show a dullard's glance,
But in my mind are spangles, and music and a dance—
Tra-la, the hid Romance!

And I suspect, O, brothers and sisters, drab and prim,
'Tis quite the same with all of you, with every Her and Him
That goes in masking trim.

The whole earth hides the truth, and, faith, it is a parlous game
To make a pale-faced misery of such a glorious game,
With all of us to blame.

So let us be like mummers who grin and lift their lays
And kick their heels at heaven a hundred happy ways,
Sky-larking down the days!

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FICTION IN DEMAND AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

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The following lists of books in demand in June in the public libraries of the United States have been compiled from reports made by two hundred representative libraries, in every section of the country and in cities of all sizes down to ten thousand population. The order of choice is as stated by the librarians.

NEW YORK AND NEW ENGLAND STATES

1. The Portygee	*Joseph C. Lincoln*	APPLETON
2. The Man of the Forest	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
3. The Great Impersonation	*E. Phillips Oppenheim*	LITTLE, BROWN
4. Red and Black	*Grace S. Richmond*	DOUBLEDAY
5. Mary Marie	*Eleanor H. Porter*	HOUGHTON
6. The River's End	*James Oliver Curwood*	COSMOPOLITAN

SOUTH ATLANTIC STATES

1. The Man of the Forest	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
2. The Portygee	*Joseph C. Lincoln*	APPLETON
3. Mary Marie	*Eleanor H. Porter*	HOUGHTON
4. The Ramblin' Kid	*Earl Wayland Bowman*	BOBBS-MERRILL
5. September	*Frank Swinnerton*	DORAN
6. The Great Desire	*Alexander Black*	HARPER

NORTH CENTRAL STATES

1. The Portygee	*Joseph C. Lincoln*	APPLETON
2. The Man of the Forest	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
3. The Great Impersonation	*E. Phillips Oppenheim*	LITTLE, BROWN
4. The Lamp in the Desert	*Ethel M. Dell*	PUTNAM
5. September	*Frank Swinnerton*	DORAN
6. The Re-creation of Brian Kent	*Harold Bell Wright*	BOOK SUPPLY

SOUTH CENTRAL STATES

1. The Man of the Forest	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
2. The Re-creation of Brian Kent	*Harold Bell Wright*	BOOK SUPPLY
3. The Lamp in the Desert	*Ethel M. Dell*	PUTNAM
4. Mary Marie	*Eleanor H. Porter*	HOUGHTON
5. The Portygee	*Joseph C. Lincoln*	APPLETON
6. Bars of Iron	*Ethel M. Dell*	PUTNAM

WESTERN STATES

1. The Man of the Forest	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
2. Red and Black	*Grace S. Richmond*	DOUBLEDAY
3. The Re-creation of Brian Kent	*Harold Bell Wright*	BOOK SUPPLY
4. September	*Frank Swinnerton*	DORAN
5. The Portygee	*Joseph C. Lincoln*	APPLETON
6. Mary Marie	*Eleanor H. Porter*	HOUGHTON

FOR THE WHOLE UNITED STATES

1. The Man of the Forest	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
2. The Portygee	*Joseph C. Lincoln*	APPLETON
3. The Great Impersonation	*E. Phillips Oppenheim*	LITTLE, BROWN
4. Mary Marie	*Eleanor H. Porter*	HOUGHTON
5. Red and Black	*Grace S. Richmond*	DOUBLEDAY
6. The Great Desire	*Alexander Black*	HARPER

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GENERAL BOOKS IN DEMAND AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

COMPILED BY FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE IN COOPERATION WITH THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The titles have been scored by the simple process of giving each a credit of six for each time it appears as first choice, and so down to a score of one for each time it appears in sixth place. The total score for each section and for the whole country determines the order of choice in the table herewith.

NEW YORK AND NEW ENGLAND STATES

1. Now It Can Be Told	*Philip Gibbs*	HARPER
2. White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
3. The Education of Henry Adams	*Henry Adams*	HOUGHTON
4. A Labrador Doctor	*Wilfred T. Grenfell*	HOUGHTON
5. The Economic Consequences of the Peace	*John Maynard Keynes*	HARCOURT
6. Theodore Roosevelt	*William Roscoe Thayer*	HOUGHTON

SOUTH ATLANTIC STATES

1. Now It Can Be Told	*Philip Gibbs*	HARPER
2. The Economic Consequences of the Peace	*John Maynard Keynes*	HARCOURT
3. White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
4. The Education of Henry Adams	*Henry Adams*	HOUGHTON
5. Theodore Roosevelt's Letters to His Children	*Joseph Bucklin Bishop*	SCRIBNER
6. An American Idyll	*Cornelia S. Parker*	ATLANTIC

NORTH CENTRAL STATES

1. The Economic Consequences of the Peace	*John Maynard Keynes*	HARCOURT
2. An American Idyll	*Cornelia S. Parker*	ATLANTIC
3. White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
4. Theodore Roosevelt's Letters to His Children	*Joseph Bucklin Bishop*	SCRIBNER
5. Life of John Marshall	*Albert Beveridge*	HOUGHTON
6. "Marse Henry"	*Henry Watterson*	DORAN

SOUTH CENTRAL STATES

1. White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
2. An American Idyll	*Cornelia S. Parker*	ATLANTIC
3. Modern American Poetry	*Louis Untermeyer*	HARCOURT
4. A Labrador Doctor	*Wilfred T. Grenfell*	HOUGHTON
5. Best Short Stories of 1919	*Edward J. O'Brien*	SMALL, MAYNARD
6. Life of John Marshall	*Albert Beveridge*	HOUGHTON

WESTERN STATES

1. The Economic Consequences of the Peace	*John Maynard Keynes*	HARCOURT
2. The Education of Henry Adams	*Henry Adams*	HOUGHTON
3. White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
4. Theodore Roosevelt's Letters to His Children	*Joseph Bucklin Bishop*	SCRIBNER
5. The Inside Story of the Peace Conference	*E. J. Dillon*	HARPER
6. Raymond	*Sir Oliver Lodge*	DORAN

FOR THE WHOLE UNITED STATES

1. White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
2. Now It Can Be Told	*Philip Gibbs*	HARPER
3. The Economic Consequences of the Peace	*John Maynard Keynes*	HARCOURT
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THE GOSSIP SHOP

SHADES of Shakespeare! The epitapher, penning the lines,—

> Good friend for Jesus sake forbeare,
> To digg the dust encloased heare.
> Blese be ye man yt spares thes stones,
> And curst be he yt moves my bones,—

must have felt a prophetic twinge of destiny as to the multitudinous seas of ink that should flow in the quarrel over the authorship of his plays. Yesterday it was Bacon, today it is the earl of Oxford, or of Rutland ("Lord Rutland Est Shakespeare", by Abel Lefranc), or of Derby ("Sous le Masque de William Shakespeare", by Celestin Demblon)—never less than a lord. The latter book, it has been suggested, by the way, is a delicate compliment to the present ambassador in Paris. The Stratfordian must have been a various person; as a literary gentleman whom "The New Statesman" recalls in "Nicholas Nickleby" remarked concerning him: "Bill was an adapter...so he was—and very well he adapted, too, considering."

A complaint of speed is entered against the breakneck pace of acting in the spring festival plays in Stratford, April 16-May 8, according to the "Manchester Guardian" — a change from the Henry Irving vogue satirized as "donkey racing". "What needs my Shakespeare?" asks the outraged correspondent. "Why a high velocity phonograph, and a 3-speed-gear kinematograph." Get the effect of this at 180 words a minute:

> Not poppy, nor mandragora,
> Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world
> Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
> Which thou owedst yesterday.

Another correspondent argues that such acting is memorable in that "the romantic lay figures are humanized, the great set speeches taken at a stride before the audience grows self-conscious; speech may be nothing but mere gabble...pace in Shakespeare is as subtle a thing as in a Mozart sonata. These plays are designed for those who have a late train to catch."

Mr. Tarkington's famous good nature and modesty is shown in his reception of the somewhat pungent criticisms of his friend Murray Hill on such intimate matters as the shape of his nose, the fit of his coat, his grammar, and other points presumably sacred to himself and his Maker. In a recent letter to the Gossip Shop from Kennebunkport, Maine, B. T. said:

"Had I seen the proofs of the first Life and Times of Murray Hill paper, I should have changed my *hoarse voice booming* to a *rich contralto.* I like a colored cook, in a friend's house, better than I like Holliday. She asked: 'Who *was* dat talkin' in dat gran' gruff voice? I pay dollah *any* time hear him sing.'"

The Gossip Shop wishing to regale its readers with this bit, Mr. Tarking-

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ton hesitated: "The subject of cooks (to people in the country particularly) is so serious, that there is dynamite in it. Our cook is *very* peculiar. Just what did I say?"

And on reflection he wired: "All right of course. I feared I had said something about our own who is literary." We are going to look up her name on our list of subscribers.

Other literary laurels are being questioned in France. The heirs of August Maquet are demanding that his name appear with that of Dumas on those works in which he collaborated. And Pierre Louys, in his latest book, affirms that the greater number of Molière's plays were written by Corneille.

French critics, it seems, are pondering that American phenomenon, Vachel Lindsay. In an article devoted to the poet in the "Nouvelle Revue Française" Valery Larbaud demands:

> What would the aged Whitman have thought, had he been able to see this poetry alongside of which his appears academic and pompous? Perhaps, after frowning a bit, he would have said, smiling: "Yes, after all, here is my successor."

Which causes a commentator in "The Anglo-French Review" to wonder "what sort of poetry it will be that will look on M. Vachel Lindsay as academic". By the way, the time is almost here for Mr. Lindsay's visit to England. He sails in September.

To many of us "war literature" has signified either records of adventure or bursts of lyricism. But recent studies of the writing produced during the entire war period show the wide scope of this output. Such a survey is "French Literature in the Great War", by Professor Albert Schinz of Smith College. Germany's contribution is the subject of a French volume ("La Littérature Allemande pendant la Guerre"), by Maurice Muret. M. Muret's aim, however, is to present a picture of social and political conditions rather than a book of literary criticism. He devotes considerable attention to the metamorphosis of Maximilian Harden.

Those literary sleuths who exult in the discovery of mixed metaphors and similar lapses will welcome the compilation of Albert Cim. Here are a few of the specimens in M. Cim's collection:

> Gustave Droz, in "Monsieur, Madame et Bebé": "I felt a tear mounting to my throat."
>
> Edmond About, in "Les Mariages de Paris": "Victorine continued to read while closing her eyes."
>
> Charles Merouvel, in "Jenny Fayelle": "This woman had a svelt and supple waist that a man's hand could have imprisoned in his ten fingers."
>
> Alphonse Daudet in "Tartarin de Tarascon": "Four thousand Arabs were running barefoot, gesticulating, laughing wildly, and causing to shine in the sun six hundred thousand white teeth."
>
> The Goncourt brothers, in "Germinie Lacerteux": "On the box the coachman's back was astounded to hear such loud weeping."
>
> Henry Murger in "Scènes de la Vie de Jeunesse": "In the depths of her breast, floating *in an ocean of tears, her heart, assassinated* by suffering, struggled while crying for help."

But—to come nearer home—here is a letter from a scandalized friend of the Gossip Shop in Washington, D. C.:

Dear Gossip Shop:

Is it not amusing that a magazine which displays as its leading article in the July issue a splendid essay on "English as She Is Spoke", should furnish the writer thereof with another horrible example of the grammarless tongue in the shape of a split infinitive from the Gossip Shop?. . . "though

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we do not mean to at all imply...", said the man in the Gossip Shop, while speaking pleasantly of the atmosphere of Paul Elder's book place.

Of course, it *is* amusing.

Anyway, I laughed.

Yours sincerely,
Mary Patterson.

Follows Mr. Ellsworth's apologia regarding "An Oldtimer's" charge of using a "chestnut" in his book of unimpeachable stories and reminiscences:

Dear Gossip Shop:

Every once in a while someone gets righteously excited over the fact that the "polar-bear" story in my book "A Golden Age of Authors" isn't new. Right they are—it is at least thirty years old and very likely much older. I don't tell it as if it were new. I am speaking of how I helped to entertain an audience in an insane asylum, and I say this:

> I told them the "polar-bear" story—it was new then, and the shout at the dénouement was instantaneous. People who have lost some of their wits certainly retain their sense of humor. That "polar-bear" story was first told in New York by Mary Mapes Dodge's son, "Jamie" Dodge, at the Barnard Club. For the benefit of those who may not have heard it I set it down here.

Then it follows.

There is another story that is not new,—the Sherlock Holmes tale which Conan Doyle told at an Aldine Club dinner. In that connection I say:

> The stories that occur in this book are, I think, generally hitherto unpublished. I know this was printed somewhere, but I have told it many times in a lecture and have yet to meet the first person who has heard it before, so it is included here.

I know now where it was printed. It was in Major Pond's "Eccentricities of Genius".

So far only two errors have cropped out. Richard Grant White wrote "The New Gospel of Peace" and not Park Benjamin, and "What hath God wrought" is from the Book of Numbers and not from the Psalms. If any of your readers know of any other mistakes I shall be glad to correct them.

Cordially yours,
William W. Ellsworth.

We must admit we had to look up the Sherlock Holmes tale, and on the toss-up, here it is:

> On his arrival in Boston Doyle told us that he had noticed a dog-eared but familiar volume peeping out of his cabman's pocket. "You may drive me to Young's or the Parker House," he said.
>
> "Pardon me," returned cabbie, "you will find Major Pond waiting for you at the Parker House."
>
> As they parted, the cabman asked for a pass to the lecture instead of a fee, and Doyle said: "Now, see here, I am not usually beaten at my own game. How did you know who I am?"
>
> "Well, sir, of course all members of the Cabmen's Literary Guild knew you were coming on this train, and, I noticed, sir, if you will excuse me, that your hair has the cut of a Quakerish, Philadelphia barber; your hat shows on the brim in front where you tightly grasped it at a Chicago literary luncheon; your right overshoe has on it what is plainly a big block of Buffalo mud; and there are crumbs of a doughnut, which must have been bought at the Springfield station, on the top of your bag. And then, sir, to make assurance doubly sure, I happened to see stenciled in plain lettering on the end of the bag the name Conan Doyle."

It isn't every college class, even of one of the big universities, that can boast of two poets of the rank of Edwin Arlington Robinson and Cale Young Rice. Yet this is the glory, or better perhaps, only some of the luck of the class of 1895 of Harvard which has just been celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary. As a part of the celebration, the Class Secretary published a huge crimson volume in which each member discloses more or less what he thinks of himself and what he has been doing since graduation. The

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reader would hardly guess that the modest lines below were written by one described, on his just past fiftieth birthday, as "by all odds the greatest living American poet":

"I find that I have not much to say for myself, or of myself," Mr. Robinson wrote the Secretary, "except that I have done literary work since leaving Harvard in 1893. I have written from time to time for the magazines, and have published several books of verse. I might add that several superficial critics who have called me a pessimist have been entirely wrong in their diagnosis. In point of fact, I recommend a careful reading of my books to anyone who wishes to become an incurable optimist. My principal hatreds, or two of them, are prohibition and free verse."

Cale Young Rice—as the London Bookman said the other day, "a great poet because his first and last impressions are perfections of lyrical beauty"—likewise turns the curious to his books, but with a shade more emphasis: "If the class of '95 wishes to know what I've thought during the last twenty-five years", he says, "let it go to the books I've written—or be damned. If it wishes to know what I've done besides write books (and give readings from them) let it hear that I had a Chair of English Literature for a year after leaving college; that I've travelled much—with my side partner, Alice Hegan Rice—all over the world; that I've seen and read much of peoples, politics, religions, and literatures; and that I believe particularly, just now, that a League of Nations and every other sane way of internationalizing and creating world opinion is the great hope of the future.

"If the said class wishes also—as per questions—to know what I think of myself and my work, it will have to establish an intimacy with me that does not at present exist. For why should I reveal to strangers such important things as the kind of socks and toothbrush I prefer?"

Mark Lee Luther, another member of the class, whose "Presenting Jane McRae" is doing just now very well indeed, seems to have risen to the bait, "Would you go into the same business if you were twenty-five tomorrow?" He replies: "Your second bolt in the air—'Would you go into the same business if you were twenty-five tomorrow?'—ought to flush reams of copy. It is an indoor sport that every man with gray hair or a bald spot is sure to play. It belongs in the same insidious class as solitaire, and like solitaire tempts you to cheat yourself. It is a game for the tired business man when too debilitated for the Follies or golf. Being a business man he is free to fancy he had a choice. But the writer is barred. He knows that his business chose him. It attacked him like a disease and, the publishers failing to kill the germ, the thing became chronic. He realizes that it was in his system at Harvard and that it throve under the elms. Yet he has no regrets. He would cheerfully go there again and run the same risk, for he likes his malady. He would not know what to do without it after all these years."

A courageous publisher is bringing out another Austen book—"Personal Aspects" this time, by Mary A. Austen-Leigh. A French translation of "Pride and Prejudice" has just been made by Mme. Bertaux, who in a recent number of "Les Annales" commends the author as "loved and cele-

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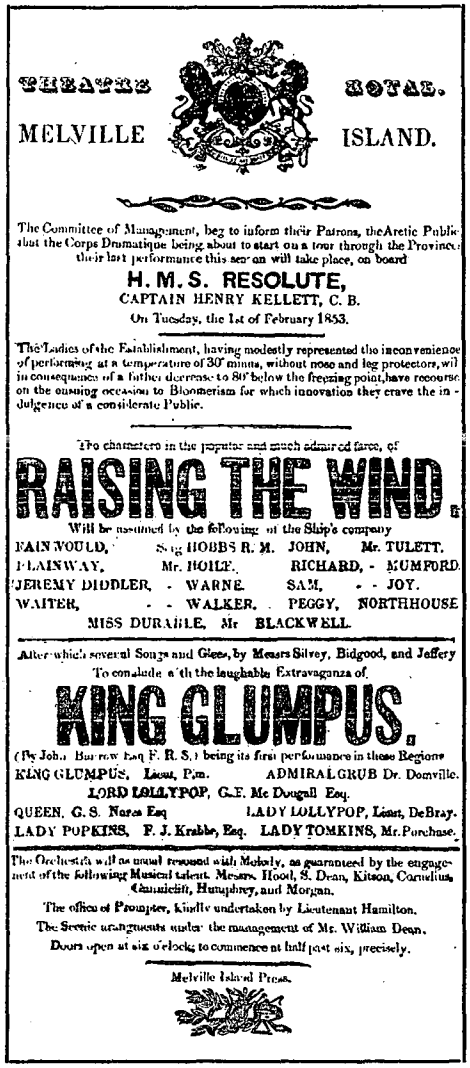
brated in England, an author whom young girls and serious persons read with respectful and delicate pleasure". Who do *not* read "Jane" and why, Gertrude Atherton lately made the thread of a rapid-fire discourse in the "Times" in which Mr. Firkins's book was the bull's-eye. One gathers that Mr. Firkins's Austen idiosyncrasy is more or less of a Freudian matter. Yet today no higher praise can adorn the publisher's jacket than an Austen similitude, and in Miss Austen's day she was the mirror and the mold of form for women writers. As Virginia Woolf, that modern young Englishwoman, says: "To be a popular writer in the year 1850 it was necessary to write well. The women writers in particular wrote very well. Presumably the ordeal of appearing in print was then so severe that no lady went through it without taking pains with her deportment. Jane Austen, moreover, had set the fashion...."

Virginia Woolf is the daughter of the Encyclopædia Britannica editor Sir Leslie Stephen—who as everybody knows married Thackeray's younger daughter—and the god-daughter of James Russell Lowell. Mrs. Woolf's private printing press, the Hogarth, has issued already several books by American authors.

A recent Thackeray find (too recent for inclusion in the Henry Van Duzer bibliography whose publication a little while ago stirred even lukewarm Thackerayans) is the "King Glumpus" playbill. Here is the little rarity that created a literary sensation as the earliest clue to the authorship of that mysterious playlet which for more than half a century kept everybody guessing.

At Thackeray's death in 1863, illustrations of the play (one of the few plays he illustrated for the stage and in which he is said to have acted a part) were found among his memoranda, with references to the text. But that text



THEATRE ROYAL.

MELVILLE ISLAND.

The Committee of Management, beg to inform their Patrons, the Aretic Public that the Corps Dramatique being about to start on a tour through the Provinces their last performance this season will take place, on board

H. M. S. RESOLUTE,

CAPTAIN HENRY KELLETT, C. B.

On Tuesday, the 1st of February 1853.

The Ladies of the Establishment, having modestly represented the inconvenience of performing at a temperature of 30° minus, without nose and leg protectors, will in consequence of a further decrease to 80° below the freezing point, have recourse on the ensuing occasion to Bloomerism for which innovation they crave the indulgence of a considerate Public.

The characters in the popular and much admired farce, of

RAISING THE WIND.

Will be sustained by the following of the Ship's company

FAIN WOULD, Sig. HOBBS R. M. JOHN, Mr. TULETT.
PLAINWAY, Mr. HOILE. RICHARD, - MUMFORD.
JEREMY DIDDLER, - WARNE. SAM, - - JOY.
WAITER, - - WALKER. PEGGY, NORTHOUSE
MISS DURABLE, Mr BLACKWELL.

After which several Songs and Glees, by Messrs Silvey, Bidgood, and Jeffery

To conclude with the laughable Extravaganza of

KING GLUMPUS.

(By John Barrow Esq F. R. S.) being its first performance in these Regions

KING GLUMPUS, Lieut, P.m. ADMIRAL GRUB Dr. Domville.
LORD LOLLYPOP, G.E. Mc Dougall Esq.
QUEEN, G. S. Nares Esq LADY LOLLYPOP, Lieut, DeBray.
LADY POPKINS, F. J. Krabbe, Esq. LADY TOMKINS, Mr. Purchase.

The Orchestra will as usual resound with Melody, as guaranteed by the engagement of the following Musical talent. Messrs. Hood, S. Dean, Kitson, Cornelius, Chamberlain, Humphrey, and Morgan.

The office of Prompter, kindly undertaken by Lieutenant Hamilton.

The Scenic arrangements under the management of Mr. William Dean.

Doors open at six o'clock; to commence at half past six, precisely.

Melville Island Press.

could not be found. Imagine the excitement in 1898 when it turned up. Even the *old* Bookman ran a headliner, "An Interesting Thackeray Discovery", with the illustrated play in full and with preface to the effect that "admirers of the author will find both

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text and illustrations extremely Thackerayesque"; and the publishers of the magazine cabled $1,000 to a rare book dealer in London for it. One could have bought a small Philippine island for the amount at the time, a sarcastic contributor observed in a following issue and added, "That Thackeray wrote a line of the text I don't one moment believe." And he was right, as this little playbill in time proved.

In a delightful article about Thackeray as editor which George Sargent writes on Mr. Van Duzer's peerless collection for the Boston "Transcript", Mr. Sargent, while paying every tribute to the bibliography and the collection, makes this statement: "The Whitey-Brown Paper Magazine, the unique copy of which... brought $3800 in the Lambert sale, is an omission." The Gossip Shop hears that by many Thackeray collectors the Whitey-Brown Paper Magazine is supposed not to be an original publication, but a made-up volume taken from "The Autograph Mirror".

Of the many tempting little items listed in this collection, we cannot resist quoting a few notes. Here is a bit of advice written from the Garrick Club: "My dear old B.: Never have a literary man for a correspondent. Them's my sentiments to you. He's like a writing-master at a plain letter or a professional dancer at a quadrille. Considers himself too grand for it."

Again: "My dear Mrs. Cole: I am going to confiscate an American rocking-chair which has been an eye- and shin-sore in my room for years past since a Yankee captain gave it me...."

Beneath a pen-and-ink drawing of a party of seven at dinner are these lines: *"My Lord:* Dearest Mrs. D., how incomparably lovely you are." *"D:* For this and all thy other mercies, the Lord make us truly thankful."

On the back of a note declining an invitation to dinner, is a pen-and-ink sketch of a little boy saying his prayers. A postscript is added as follows: "On the back of the note I see with dismay the picture of a little boy saying his prayers. As the subject is moral and edifying, I don't write a new note and economize a piece of paper."

Why doesn't someone make a collection of Thackeray letters, and get them published? An American, by all means, since this side has always been first both in collecting and publishing Thackerayana.

In view of the present fad of books relating to psychic phenomena, it is interesting to hear Zona Gale say that Mary Johnston's Swedenborgian novel "Michael Forth" is in her opinion the most important book of fiction of recent years—not so much from the standpoint of standards (whatever that is) as from the standpoint of values transcending standards. "The psychical research folk," Miss Gale said the other day, "bid fair to be outdistanced publicly as they are in reality, and left presenting the obvious, the mere resultant, while science flows back to causation itself." Miss Gale goes on to say (for the Gossip Shop's private and particular ear):

"Mary Johnston has set herself to interpret, through fiction, a tremendous adventure, whose A. B. C. of interpretation was Dr. Buck's 'Cosmic Consciousness'. The first intimation of this comes to Michael Forth in his love story—that entrance upon a new level of consciousness which is one of the reasons of the world's thraldom to romance, since the enhancement of

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consciousness which comes with love is the chief enhancement of consciousness which the majority of the race ever knows. Such a love as Michael's which replies to a lure to unfaithfulness, 'No, the winged thing mustn't return to the finned thing', makes the modern sex novel a mere record of biological failures.

"In one of Michael's important experiences, he says: 'I looked at the lilies by the reeds. They were very fair; they trembled on the dark water; they seemed lit from beneath, sapphire, exquisite. The reeds grew musical instruments and living green and of a vivid grace. It was a flash of transfiguration.' May Sinclair has made note of the same experience in the moment before the thorn tree in 'The Three Sisters' and in a measure in the occasional 'strange and secret happiness' of Mary Olivier, in whose last recorded experience the new consciousness is strongly present.

"There are in the story suggestions of Einstein's ideas of space and time; of H. G. Wells's 'There is no difference between time and space, except that our consciousness flows along it', for man at different ages is 'a three-dimensional representation of a fourth-dimensional being'. Evelyn Underhill in her three remarkable books on mysticism gave a clear, intellectual presentment in London. A. E.'s 'Candle of Vision' is one of the most recent and exquisite expositions."

Forthcoming is another book by Aldous Huxley—this time poetry, "Leda". Mr. Huxley is by turns several different kinds of a poet in this volume, so that the following bit is not representative—it is merely a delightfully whimsical fragment of his reflections on "the irony of being two" which we for one cannot resist:

Oh, the dear front page of the Times!
Chronicle of essential history:
Marriage, birth, and the sly mysteriousness
Of lovers' greetings, of lovers' meetings.....

* * * *

The life so short, so vast love's science and art,
So many conditions of felicity.
"Darling, will you become a part
Of my poor physiology?
And, my beloved, may I have
The latchkey of your history?
And while this corpse is what it is
Dear, we must share geographies."

Arthur Guiterman, in a rhymed characterization of that much-damned woman and well-praised book "Invincible Minnie", chivalrously calls Minnie a Libel. Certainly she doesn't belong to the "woman—lovely woman" era, nor yet to the "be-good-and-let-who-will-be-clever" period. That she is dumpy with a "neat waist" takes her out of the Theda Bara class. Oliver Herford calls her the "she-bear of fiction". On account of the frightful potentialities of the creature she is anathema to all readers—a clinging vine that may become any minute a parasite with strangle hold. She is a modern Clytemnestra and Medea.

Here are Mr. Guiterman's verses:

A weirder beast than unicorn
  Or basilisk described by Pliny
Is this receptacle of scorn,
  The truly admirable Minnie.

By stuffing straw in female clothes
  The Author viciously creates her
With every fault said Author loathes,
  And then elaborately hates her.

How Minnie nursed her moral taint
  Of stupid selfishness, but hid it,
And seemed a sweet, domestic saint,
  I fail to see—but Minnie did it.

By methods crude as crudest oil
  She stole her sister's only fellow,
Who spun not, neither did he toil,
  A pleasant waster, tinted yellow.

A female of the Minnie kind,
  While dead to loftier emotion,
May show to mate or child, we find,
  A reckless, ruinous devotion.

So, since her husband must be fed,
  No matter what must happen later,

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Our Minnie bigamously wed
A wealthy Swedish real-estater.

And Minnie stole, and Minnie lied,
And Minnie grafted, wholly lawless,
Yet always smugly satisfied
That all her acts were pure and flawless.

'Tis not Romance, the Author deems,
Nor Realism. On the Bible,
I'll say she's right in that; it seems
Like what they used to call a Libel.

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News of Benjamin Franklin's "golden snowball"—the accrued interest on his thousand-dollar bequest to the city of Philadelphia—is reviving in England some old Franklin stories. It seems that when he was a compositor in London he was known as "the American aquatic", not developing a taste for wine until he lived in Paris as American Minister. Abbé Mouellet in "Lettres à Lord Shelbourne" quotes a letter in which Franklin says that the wickedness of man before the flood was due to there being nothing but water to drink. Noah had such a sickness of water whilst in the ark that he invented wine, and thereafter —with the exception of one lapse from sobriety—trod the path of virtue till death came. With his letter Franklin sent the Abbé some drawings to prove that whereas all other animals with long legs have long necks so that they can drink easily from rivers and streams, man has a short neck. He evidently was meant to drink well out of a glass, but Providence intends that the inferior animals shall drink water.

Alexander J. Wall has done a good piece of work in compiling a list of New York almanacs 1694-1850. It includes collections of fifty-four libraries, and is a most valuable book for the collector. The collecting of almanacs, by the way, is a fascinating hobby. To fully appreciate how much of history, wit and wisdom lies between the covers of an old almanac, read "The Old Farmer and His Almanac", by Professor George Lyman Kittredge of Harvard, whose boundless erudition and sense of humor have made a most readable book on an apparently unpromising subject.

News of the publication of a sequel to "Marie-Claire" stirs memories of the sensation caused by the American importation, almost a decade ago, of that first literary attempt of a French seamstress. If you read that book, you will recall that at the end the heroine, in desperation, sets out for Paris. "L'Atelier de Marie-Claire" describes her experiences in Paris and furnishes a graphic picture of the life of the worker in a dressmaking establishment.

For twenty years the house at Olney, Buck, in which the poet William Cowper lived from 1767 to 1786, has been known as the Cowper and Newton Museum. This building, containing a collection of Cowper's works, has long been the object of literary pilgrimages. Recently the garden has been purchased in which stands the summer house so frequently mentioned in Cowper's charming letters. The trustees who have bought and paid for the property must now meet the cost of restoring it, and for this purpose a fund is being raised. A second edition of the "Life of William Cowper" by Thomas Wright is now on the press.

News comes from England that Archibald Marshall's proposed visit to America this summer is off, on account of the ill-health of the novelist.

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The latest thing in poetry movements seems to be the Dadaist—a Paris importation. Here is a sample purporting to be by one Louis Aragon which is said to make the most futuristic futurist look like a cave man. It is called "Suicide" and runs:

a b c d e
f g h i j
k l m n o
p q r s t
u v w
x y z

And the last few lines of another which begins "Clgr Grlt Gzdr" (the last two lines mean "Whistle of yellow ink and slap"):

àdada
ibidilzi
planche
simili
galvanoplastie
ra
ga
ta
ga
ribaldi
course
sifflet d'encre jaune
et gifle

"Few would care to commit themselves on so peculiar a question", said Gelett Burgess when approached by the American Library Association in their recent symposium on books most helpful in reaching success. "Suppose I should say, for instance, that Sinnett's 'Esoteric Buddhism' affected me most? Yet it is as near the fact as anything I could say. I often get more stimulation from a poor book than from a good one. It drives me to surpass it, and I say, 'If this fool can dare express himself with such abandon of ignorance, why should not I, who have better things to say?'"

Shakespeare is the favorite of Charlie Chaplin; Thomas Edison has read mostly technical books, hence is too one-sided to give an answer. Sixty per cent of the votes were for the Bible, thirty per cent for Shakespeare, and the remaining ten per cent included Emerson, Carlyle, and Herbert Spencer. This is suspiciously respectable.

The recent practice of authors of naming their books for comestibles has moved another friend of the Gossip Shop (Charles F. Woods, librarian of the San Jose Free Public Library) to suggest the following:

MENU FOR THE NEXT ANNUAL DINNER OF THE AUTHORS' CLUB

COCKTAIL
Manhattan *à la Clarke*
HORS D'ŒUVRES
Mixed Pickles *à la Field*
SOUP
Red Pottage *à la Cholmondeley*
FISH
Octopus *à la Norris*
ENTRÉE
Peacock Pie *à la de la Mare*
ROAST
Roast Beef Medium *à la Ferber*
Wild Duck *à la Ibsen*
Small Potatoes *à la Isbell*
Carrots *à la Molesworth*
SALAD
Cherry *à la Tarkington*
DESSERT
Mince Pie *à la Morley*
Raspberry Jam *à la Wells*
Ladyfingers *à la Gregory*
Oranges and Lemons *à la Wemyss*
There's Pippins and Cheese to Come *à la Brooks*
Cup of Coffee *à la Reynartz*
Something that Begins with "T" *à la Strahan*
Smoke *à la Turgenev*
Sherry *à la McCutcheon* New Wine *à la Castle*

A film version of "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse" is now in the making, in which twelve hundred persons are to take part. An important scene in the photoplay will be a reproduction of the first battle of the Marne.

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